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ALFRED THE GREAT, or THE FORCE OF LOVE.

BY C. WELLS.



AT the court of Alfred the Great, King of England, was a young nobleman, the son and heir of one of his wealthiest barons ; allied to that great man, and bearing his name, Alfred. His father had been slain in battle, and had left him master of immense revenues.

B

This being soon after the expulsion of the Danes, by the personal valour and great moves of the king, the government was somewhat weak ; and the king sought to strengthen himself in the hearts of his subjects.

This young man, honouring the king's greatness, gave the whole of his riches into his hands, to farm for the use of the state, until it should be his pleasure to return them when they should cease to be needed. And, as he was of a gentle and passive disposition, he betook himself to a villa on the banks of the Thames, and there lived, entertaining his friends. Being, however, of a melancholy habit for one so young, and very thoughtful, his inclination led him to travel for relief. Having received a sufficient sum of the king, he departed ; they mutually embracing and honouring each other. The young man, in answer to his sage advice, telling him only, " Sir, I bear your name."

Having passed through many countries, he came into Tuscany. The sun was setting, and he went over the bridge into the city ; the bells were ringing, and the sound of music was distinctly heard in the meadows and vintages. The doors of the houses were open, and all the place seemed as one family. His melancholy left him, and his heart warmed within him. He no longer pondered, nor looked down, but alighted gaily from his horse, and shook the dust from the feathers in his hat, inquiring the while, the reasons for the rejoicings. He was told that the

duke had, three days since, married a noble and beautiful lady, who much loved him; and that they were to rejoice for seven days.

When the evening was come, Alfred did not, as he might have done, challenge respect of the duke, but went into the hall as a common guest, and seated himself at the bottom of the table. There he sat, studying the favour of the duke, who was of a most noble appearance: his tanned cheek was freckled yellow with the sun; his eye fiery, and as dark as his hair, and that curling heavily and as black as a crow. There hung a gold chain about his neck, and thereto a lady's likeness; and a favour of lady's hair, as yellow as gold, was tied above his naked elbow. His shoulders were covered with a lion's skin; his neck was bare, and black with the sun of many a day. His belt was a chain of iron, and his kirtle of sable skins. Behind him stood dark boys, beautiful as Arcadians: one bearing his cup and grapes, and the other resting as David on Goliath's sword. Soft music was heard from without, and the Tuscan spoke; his voice was as the sound in a cave.

The trumpets sounded as he had commanded; the sweet music passed under the battlements, and when the doors opened, and the duchess advanced, his eyes shot fire. Shaking back his hair, he advanced towards her with extended arms, moving like a leopard. When they embraced, and her yellow hair mingled with his upon his back, they looked like images of the clouds.

Alfred's heart smote against his side when he saw the beauty of that lady; he ate no meat, but still gazed upon her; nor did he crush any grapes, nor mingle any wine. He heard not, felt not, thought not; he hardly breathed; his senses were in his eyes. He was as one who is "gazing himself blind by looking on the moon." All this while was his heart beating audibly, and he sat as quiet as a stone till the feast was done. When the duke had led the duchess away, and the hall was cleared, he was aroused; and, looking mournfully around, he sighed deeply, and departed weeping.

On the next day he wrote to the king as follows:—

"Kind Father!

"It importeth my honour and my life, that I should be absent from your kingdom for some time; how long, I know not. I am a slave; but I serve those whom I most love, and do bless my bondage. I want no gold, therefore use my patrimony while you want it; when not, be it bestowed for the benefit of learning, giving to the church no more than it can demand. Though the tears I now shed are not mine, I do dedicate one drop to the remembrance of old times. Be assured, that which I do at present is honourable, for I bear your name.

"ALFRED."

Calling his only attendant to him, and giving him gold, he bade him carry the letter to the King of England; and by no means to return, as he should pass forthwith into Germany; and wringing him by the hand, they parted.

As soon as he was gone, Alfred changed his habit; took a herdsman's staff, went to the gates of

the Duke of Tuscany, and demanded to see him. Now, the duke had just returned from hunting, and Alfred approached him like a nobleman, but demanded of him only to be his servant or page. The duke, seeing the greatness of the man through the poorness of his habit, entertained him, and granted his request; and, liking his face, placed him close to his person. Presently the duchess came riding in: he spoke to her of what he had done; and when she saw Alfred she approved it all. The duke desired him to help his lady from her horse; but he began to shake like a leaf, looked down, and was rooted to the ground. The duke unhorsed the lady, chiding Alfred for his poorness; he laying it to his new fortune that had gladdened him too much. Alfred soon took an opportunity to gain the duke's respect.

The duke and duchess, seeing continually the nobleness of his nature, grew kind to him, and he took him often by the hand, questioning him of his sorrowful aspect, and promising him to relieve his misfortunes. They often asked his advice, and would have made him great; but he refused it, liking his old office, and desiring nothing so much as to be opposite their countenances.

Thus did he live for ten years, under the affectionate notice of these two lovers (for neither time nor marriage had as yet weakened their hearts), when it happened that a Danish nobleman visited the court of Tuscany, with his daughter, a very

beautiful girl. She, seeing the nobleness of the duke, fell violently in love with him; and the duke, seeing the richness of the prize, and feeling the power of his conquest, was guilty enough to return her passion; forgetting the heart of the duchess. And because she should not know of his amour, he gave it out that both his guests would depart from his court, and ordered a feast to their honour. But he had secretly paid a weighty sum of gold to the Dane, that the lady, his daughter, should remain with him; and on the night of her departure she returned, and was received privily into a castle, that was in a wood, out of the city.

The delicate and susceptible nature of the duchess soon told her that something perilous threatened her love. By the duke's manner and conduct she could read a difference in his heart; yet she could by no means suspect the cause. Trusting, however, to his honour, as well as she could, she stifled these feelings, and bent to all his humours; endeavouring by patient suffering to win him back to what he was. Yet did she never question him of the difference; nor even appear to know it, except by the greater tenderness of her conduct.

Alfred, who watched over the lady's happiness with the vigilance of a lynx, when he found the truth, hated the Tuscan, and dedicated himself by all means in his power to procure the duchess peace and tranquillity. Willingly would he have taken

what the duke had cast aside; but he knew the duchess's nature, and her love for the duke, and he never divulged himself, nor the heavy secret of his heart.

When he saw the duchess sicken and become pale, his heart ached for her; and he tried by all means in his power to make good the stories of the duke, when he excused himself for having been abroad all night, by saying he had hunted too far into the country, or that being sick he took a change of air. But her love for the duke could penetrate too easily through a veil so thin. She called a page to her, and said, "This evening my lord purposes to ride; bring me thy dress, and hide thou in my chamber. Fear not, I will stand betwixt thee and all harm." The page did as she had requested; and, having disguised herself, she rode out with her husband, went with him to the castle, and staid there that night. Having seen all that had passed, she returned in the morning broken-hearted, and, shutting herself in her chamber, fell sick.

During this time, Alfred, who had been grieving for her, not knowing of what she had done, had planned to steal the lady from the castle, and carry her by force into England; and by that means once more bring the duke back to his fair duchess; but ere his plan was ripe, more fatal matter ensued. The duchess, never revealing to the duke nor any other person, that she knew of his perfidy, determined to wait patiently till he should again think

of her. But the continual pain was too much for her; and it wore her pale and thin as death. All this the duke saw, but it did not alter him; and Alfred was an equal sufferer with the duchess.

It chanced one afternoon, while the duke was with his syren, that Alfred was walking under the window of the duchess's chamber, thinking of the miseries of this world, when he heard her calling feebly to her maids, crying, "Help, help, I am dying!" And they being in a far place, and not hearing, Alfred climbed by the help of the vine into her chamber, and raising her in his arms, he said, "Pardon, dear lady, this intrusion to thy couch. What help will do thee good?" She, knowing him to be so greatly her friend, and having a feeling for all his kindnesses, was satisfied; and said, "Oh! Alfred, nothing can help me but only heaven. I am dying—dying of grief. My heart is broken. Oh! my husband!" and she fainted from weakness. Alfred saw she was dying, and he grew as weak as a child; his throat ached and his tears flowed till her fair face was wet, and she lifted up her eyes once more, and died.

Having kissed her forehead and murmured over her, he got down again by the vine; and he took two swords, and went into the woods dumb with despair, but withal most wroth. There he lay all night under the trees, staring upon the sky; and early in the morning he betook himself to the castle, and waited till the duke came from his paramour,

When he heard the hinges of the gate, and saw the head of the duke's steed coming forth, he went into the wood and blew a blast of defiance upon his horn, which the duke answered.

They met upon a level plain, where the duke dismounted; and Alfred said to him, "Sir, I do arraign you here, under heaven, of being the murderer of an innocent and beautiful lady. Oh! how most innocent and beautiful! I here stand the champion of your duchess, who is dead through the neglect of such a beast as you; and thus I challenge you." And he struck him on the cheek, and offered him one of the swords. The giant, mad at the blow, seized upon the sword and attacked Alfred desperately; but he, being determined on having the life of the duke, defended himself suddenly.

When they had fought some time, Alfred struck him on the head; he reeled against a tree and fell; and, seeing Alfred standing over him, he said, "Pause." Alfred replied, "Sir, you did not pause when your dear lady's life could have been saved through it. You have felt only for yourself, and have sacrificed her; when her pale look and aching eye have begged a merciful hour at your hand, you cared not for her pain; and lastly, whilst your hot veins were swelling with delight, you let her poorly die. You sold her unto death for your enjoyments—a sacrifice. You did not pause; therefore, as you lie upon your back in these nettles, I will not pause!" So saying, he took him by the wrist and stabbed him to the heart, and so killed him.

And he went to the court where the elders were assembled, waiting the duke's presence, to tell him of the death of his lady. Alfred walked in before them, and breaking his sword, threw it on the ground; and after a short silence he told them whose blood it was upon him, and what he had done. So they fell upon him and bound him; while some went to the forest, and there found the duke upon his back, as he had said, stabbed through and through. They made a bier of twisted boughs, with loose leaves strewed over it, and brought the body into the hall.

They would not hear Alfred, but condemned him to be beheaded on the third day. But on the night of the second he died in his prison of a broken heart.



THE RIVALS.

A TRUE STORY OF TEXAS BORDER LIFE.



MY word for it, reader, I should never have ventured to construct a professed romance out of incidents so wild and strange as those of this narration. It is only with the hope that you will accept in good faith the assurance given in the same spirit, that these things *really did occur* while I was in the country, and most of them within my personal knowledge, that I venture to relate them at all. Remember, the

scene is laid in a frontier county of Texas, and if you have even a remote conception of the history of that republic, and the general character of its social elements, you will be prepared for a good deal. But, though you might even have visited its cities and older settlements, you would still find it difficult to realize all that is true of frontier life, unless by extended travel and experience your faith should be fortified. When you can have to say, as I can, "what mine eyes have seen and ears heard," on that ground alone you will be "fit audience, though few," to receive as matters of course relations which would doubtless, for the moment, shock others as monstrous in improbability, if not impossibility. The man of high civilization will find great difficulty in understanding how such a deed as I am about to relate, requiring months to consummate, would have been carried through in the open face of law and the local authorities; but the man who knows this frontier will tell him that the rifle and bowie knife are all the law and local authority recognized. Witness the answer President Houston gave when application was first made to him for his interposition with the civil force to quell the bloody "Regulator Wars" which afterwards sprang up in this very same county—"Fight it out among yourselves, and be d—d to you!" A speech entirely characteristic of the man and the country, as it then was! It was in the earlier stages of the organization of this same "Regulator" association that our story commences.

Shelby county, lying in Western Texas, on the

border of the "Red Lands," was rather thinly settled in the latter part of '39. What population it had was generally the very worst caste of border life. The bad and desperate men who had been driven over our frontier formed a rallying ground and head-quarters here—seemingly with the determination to hold the county good against the intrusion of all honest persons, and as a sort of "Alsatia" of the West, for the protection of outlaws and villains of every grade. And indeed to such an extent had this proscription been carried that it had become notoriously as much as a man's life or conscience was worth who settled among them with any worthy purpose in view; for he must either fall into their confederacy—leave, or die! This was perfectly understood; and the objects of this confederacy may be readily appreciated when it is known that every now and then a party of men would sally out from this settlement, painted and equipped like Comanchees, with the view of carrying off the horses, plundering or murdering some marked man of a neighbouring county; then, returning with great speed, they would re-brand their plunder, resume their accustomed appearance, and defy pursuit or investigation. Not only did they band together for their operations in this way, but a single man would carry off a fine horse or commit a murder with the most open audacity, and if he only succeeded in escaping here, was publicly protected. I do not mean to have it understood that the whole population at this time were men of such stamp avowedly.

There were some few whose wealth to a degree protected them in the observances of a more seemly life, though they were compelled to at least wink at the doings of their more ruffianly and more numerous neighbours; while there was yet another but not large class of sturdy, straightforward emigrants, who, attracted solely by the beauty of the country, had come into it, settled themselves down wherever they took a fancy—with characteristic recklessness neither caring nor inquiring who were their neighbours, but trusting in their own stout arms and hearts to keep a footing. Of course all such were very soon engaged in desperate feuds with the horse thieves and plunderers around them; and, as they were not yet strong enough to make head efficiently, were one after another finally ousted or shot. It was to exterminate this honest class that the more lawless and brutal of the other associated themselves and assumed the name of “Regulators.” They numbered from eight to twelve, and, under the organization of rangers, commanded by a beastly wretch named Hinch, they professed to undertake the task of *purifying* the county limits of all bad and suspicious characters; or, in other words, of all men who dared refused to be as vile as they were, or, if they were, who chose to act independently of them and their schemes. This precious brotherhood soon became the scourge of all that region. Whenever an individual was unfortunate enough to make himself obnoxious to them, whether by a successful villany, the proceeds of which he

refused to share with them, or by the hateful contrast of the propriety of his course, he was forthwith surrounded—threatened—had his stock driven off or killed wantonly—and, if these annoyances and hints were not sufficient to drive him away, they would publicly warn him to leave the county in a certain number of days, under the penalty of being scourged or shot. The common pretext for this was the accusation of having committed some crime, which they themselves had perpetrated with a view of furnishing a charge to bring against him. Their hate was entirely ruthless, and never stopped short of accomplishing its purposes ; and in many a bloody fray and cruel outrage had the question of their supremacy been mooted, until at last there were but few left to dispute with them, and they tyrannised at will.

Among these few was Jack Long, as he was called, who neither recognised nor denied their power, and indeed never troubled himself about them one way or the other. He kept himself to himself, hunted incessantly, and nobody knew much about him. Jack had come of a "wild turkey breed," as the western term is for a roving family ; and, though still a young man, had pushed on ahead of the settlement of two territories, and had at last followed the game towards the south, and finding it abundant in Shelby county had stopped here, just as he would have stopped at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, had it been necessary to pursue it so far. He had never been in the habit of asking

leave of any power where he should settle, and of course scarcely thought of the necessity of doing so now, but quietly set to work—built himself a nice log-cabin, as far off from everybody as he could get. And the first thing that was known of him, he had his pretty young wife and two little ones snugly stowed away in it, and was slaying the deer and the bears right and left.

The honest brotherhood had made several attempts at feeling Jack's pulse and ascertaining his availability, but he had always seemed so impassively good-natured, and put them off so pleasantly, that they could find no ground for either disturbing or quarrelling with him. What was more, he was physically rather an ugly-looking "customer," with his six feet four inches of brawn and bone; though the inclination just discoverable in his figure, to corpulency, together with a broad, full, good-humoured face, gave an air of sluggishness to his energies, and an expression of easy simplicity to his temper, which offered neither invitation to gratuitous insult nor provocation to dislike. He was the very impersonation of inoffensive, loyal honesty, slumbering on its conscious strength, and these men, without exactly knowing why, felt some little disinclination to waking him. He had evidently never been roused to a knowledge of himself, and others felt just as uncertain what that knowledge might bring forth as he did, and were not specially zealous of the honour of having it first tested upon their own persons. So

that Jack Long might have been left for many a day in quiet, even in this formidable neighbourhood, to cultivate his passion for marksmanship, at the expense of the dumb, wild things around him, but for an unfortunate display he was accidentally induced to make of it.

Happening to fall short of ammunition, he went one day to "the store" for a fresh supply. This cabin, together with the blacksmith's shop and one or two other huts, constituted the "county town," and, as powder and liquor were only to be obtained there, it was the central resort of the Regulators. Jack found them all collected for a great shooting match, in preparation for which they were getting drunk as fast as possible to steady their nerves. Hinch, the Regulator captain, had always been the hero of such occasions, for, in addition to being a first-rate shot, it was known that it would be a dangerous exertion of skill for any man to beat him,—for he was a furious and vindictive bully, and would not fail to make a personal affair of it with any one who should mortify his vanity by carrying off the prize from him. In addition, the band of scoundrels he commanded was entirely at his service in any extreme, so that they made fearful odds for a single man to contend with.

Everybody else in the county was aware of this state of things but Jack Long, and he either didn't know or didn't care. After they had fired several rounds, he went lounging listlessly into the crowd

which had gathered around the target, exclaiming in admiration over the last brilliant shot of Hinch, which was triumphantly the best. The bully was as usual blustering vehemently, taunting every one around him, and when he saw Jack looking very coolly at the famous shot, with no grain of that deferential admiration in his expression which was demanded, he snatched up the board, and, thrusting it insultingly close to his face, roared out—

“Here! you Jack Long Shanks—look at that. Take a good look! Can you beat it?” Jack drew back with a quiet laugh, and said good humouredly—

“Psha! You don’t brag of such shootin’ as that, do you?”

“Brag on it! I’d like to see such a moon-eyed chap as you beat it!”

“I don’t know as I’d be very proud to beat such bunglin’ work as that.”

“You don’t! don’t you!” yelled the fellow, now fairly in a rage at Jack’s coolness. “You’ll try it, won’t you? You must try it! You shall try it, by G—d! We’ll see what sort of a swell you are!”

“Oh, well!” said Jack, interrupting him as he was proceeding to rave for quantity. “Just set up your board, if you want to see me put a ball through every hole you can make!”

Perfectly astounded at this rash bearding of the lion—for it was difficult to tell whether contempt or simplicity dictated Jack’s manner—the men set up the board, while he walked back to the stand, and,

carelessly swinging his heavy rifle from his shoulder, fired seemingly as quick as thought. "It's a trick of mine," said he, moving towards the mark, as he lowered his gun; "I caught it from shootin' varments in the eyes;—always takes 'em there. It's a notion I've got,—it's my gun." They all ran eagerly to the target, and sure enough his ball, which was larger than Hinch's, had passed through the same hole, widening it!

"He's a humbug! It's all accident! He can't do that again!" shouted the ruffian, turning pale till his lips looked blue, as the board was held up, "I'll bet the ears of a buffalo calf against his that he can't do it again!"

"If you mean by that to bet your own ears against mine, I'll take you up!" said Jack, laughing, while the men could not resist joining him. Hinch glared around him with a fierce chafed look, before which those who knew him best quailed, and with compressed lips silently loaded his gun. A new target was put up, at which, after long and careful aim, he fired. The shot was a fine one. The edge of the ball had just broke the centre. Jack, after looking at it, quietly remarked—

"Plumbing out the centre is my fashion; I'll show you a kink or two, Captain Hinch, about the clear thing in shootin'. Give us another board there, boys!"

Another was set up, and, after throwing out his gun on the level, in the same rapid, careless style

as before, he fired; and, when the eager crowd around the target announced that he had driven the centre cross clear out, he turned upon his heel, and, with a pleasant nod to Hinch, started to walk off. The ruffian shouted hoarsely after him—

“I thought you were a d—d coward! You’ve made two good shots by accident, and now you sneak off to brag that you’ve beat me. Come back, sir! You can’t shoot before a muzzle half as true!”

Jack walked on without noticing this mortal insult and challenge, while Hinch laughed tauntingly long and loud—jeering him with exulting bitterness, as long as he could make himself heard, as a “flash in the pan,”—“a dunghill cock, who had spread his white feather,” while the men, who had been surprised into a profound respect for Long, and were now still more astonished at what they considered his “backing out,” joined clamorously in hooting his retreat.

The fools! They made a fatal mistake in supposing he left the insult unresented from any fear for himself. Jack Long had a young and very pretty wife at home, and his love for her was stronger than his resentment for his own indignity. His passions were slow, and had never been fully roused—none of them at least but his love, and that presented her instantly, forlorn and deserted, with her little ones, in this wild country, should he throw away his life with such desperate odds; and, seeing the turn the affair was likely to take, he had prudently de-

etermined to get away before it had gone too far. But had any of those men seen the spasm of agony which shivered across his massive features, as these gibing voices rang upon his ears in insult which no proud free hunter might endure, they would have taken the hint to beware of chafing the silently foaming boar any longer.

This was an ill-starred day for Jack, though ; from this time troubles began to thicken about him. The even tenour of his simple happy life was destroyed, and indignity and outrage followed each other fast. Hinch never forgave the unlucky skill which had robbed him of his proudest boast, that of being the best marksman on the frontier ; and he swore, in base vindictive hate, to dog him to the death, or make him leave the country. Soon after this a valuable horse belonging to a rich and powerful planter disappeared. He was one of those men who had compromised with the Regulators, paying so much black mail for exemption from their depredations, and protection against others of the same stamp ; and he now applied to Hinch for the recovery of his horse, and the punishment of the thief. This Hinch, under their contract, was bound to do, and promised to accomplish forthwith. He and some of his men went off on the trail of the missing horse, and, returning next day, announced that they had followed it with all their skill through a great many windings, evidently intended to throw off pursuit, and had at last traced it to Jack Long's picket fence, and there could be no doubt but

he was the thief! The planter knew nothing of Jack, but that he was a new comer, and demanded that he should be forced to give up the horse, and punished to the extremity of the frontier code.

But this was not Hinch's policy yet awhile. He knew the proofs were not strong enough to make the charge plausible even before a Lynch Court, of which he himself was both the prosecutor, judge, and executioner. His object was to first get up a hue and cry against Long, and, under cover of a general excitement, accomplish his devilish purposes without question or mock trial even. So that, after a great deal of manœuvring, for eight or ten days, during which time the charge against Long was industriously circulated by his myrmidons, so as to attract general attention and expectation, as to the result of his investigations, he proclaimed far and wide that he had found the horse at last, hid in a timber bottom near Long's! This, of course, seemed strong confirmation of his guilt, and, though the mob were most of them horse thieves, to all intents, yet it was an unpardonable crime for any one to practise professionally among themselves; so that Long was loudly denounced and threatened on every side, and ordered to leave the country forthwith.

These proceedings Jack by no means comprehended, or felt disposed to be moved by; but he gave them to understand that he meant to remain where he was, until it entirely suited his convenience to go, and that, if his time and theirs did not happen to agree, they might make the most of it. And Jack was such

an unpromising snagging-looking somebody, and his reputation, which had now spread everywhere, of possessing such consummate skill with the rifle, that he thought it a condescension to shoot anywhere else but in the eyes, was so formidable, that no individual felt disposed to push the matter to a personal collision. He might, still, therefore, have been left in quiet, but Hinch had unfortunately taken up the impression, from Jack's conduct in the shooting-match affair, that he must be a coward, and, if this were true, then all his skill amounted to but little, and, like any other bloody wolfish brute, he followed him up the more eagerly for this very reason, which would have disarmed a generous foe. Besides, Jack had given fresh and weightier matter of offence, in that he had refused to obey, and defied his authority as Regulator. The very being of that authority seemed to require now that a wholesome example should be made of him, for the awing of all refractory persons hereafter. The wretch, who was cunning as ferocious, and had sworn in his inmost heart to ruin and disgrace Long, from the moment of that triumph, now availed himself remorselessly of all his influence, and knowledge of the society around him, to accomplish it. Several horses now disappeared, and robberies of other kinds, perpetrated with singular dexterity, followed in quick succession. All these things he managed, through the clamours of his scoundrelly troops, to have laid, directly or indirectly, to Jack's door.

But in the popular estimation they counted as nothing in fixing the charge of dangerous malice upon poor Long, in comparison with one other incident. About this time not only Hinch himself, but every other person who had made himself conspicuous, by insisting upon Jack's guilt, and the necessity of punishing him summarily, began to lose, every day or two, valuable stock, which was wantonly shot down sometimes in sight of their houses ; and it soon began to be remarked that every animal lost in this way *had been shot in the eye!* This was instantly associated, of course, with Jack's well-known and curious predilection for that mark in hunting, and a perfect storm of indignation followed. A meeting was at once convened at "the store," of which the planter was the chairman ; and at it, by a unanimous vote, a resolution was passed, condemning Jack Long to be whipped and driven out of the country, and Hinch, with his Regulators, appointed to carry it into effect ! He could hardly contain himself for joy ; for now, whatever extreme his pitiless malignity might choose to indulge itself in, he had no fear of after-claps or questioning. The meeting had been a mere form at any rate. But these "formalities" are all-powerful everywhere ; and unsettled and elementary as was the condition of society here, this ruffian leader of ruffians felt the necessity of acting under their sanction, though he himself had dictated it. He would and could have consummated his purposes without it ; but the faint life of conscience within him—by a logic

peculiar to itself—felt relieved of the grievous responsibility of such a crime, in the sense of participating with so many others. Many a man has gone to the devil in a crowd who would have been horrified at undertaking the journey alone.



CHAPTER II.



It was the third day after this meeting. Jack, during all these persecutions, had deported himself with the most stolid indifference.

Avoiding all intercourse with the settlers, he had continued to hunt with even more assiduity than usual, and was in a great measure ignorant of the unenviable notoriety he was enjoying. He had heard something of the charges with which his character had been assailed, but attributed them all to the jealous enmity he had incurred at the shooting match. He could understand perfectly how

one man could hate another who had beat him in shooting, and thought it natural enough; but he could not understand how that hatred might be meanly and desperately vindictive, and, therefore, gave himself no uneasiness about it. He was only anxious that his wife should not hear and be annoyed by any of these things, and preserved his usual cheerfulness of demeanour.

He had just returned from hunting, and, laying aside his accoutrements, partook of the simple meal her neat housewifery had prepared for him; then, stretching himself upon the buffalo robe on the floor, romped with his two rosy-cheeked boys, who rolled over his great body, and gambolled and screamed in riotous joy around him; but mother wanted some water from the branch, and the frolic must be given over while Jack would go and bring it. So, jumping up, he left the little folk pouting wilfully as they looked after him from the door, and started. The stream was only about a hundred yards from the house, and the path leading to it was through a dense high thicket. It was against Jack's religion ever to leave his house without his gun; but the wife, whom he loved above all the universe of sentiment and everything else, was in a hurry for the water, and the distance was so short, so he sprang gaily out with the vessel in his hand, leaving the rifle behind. The water had been dipped up, and he was returning along the narrow path closely bordered by brush, when he felt a light tap on each

shoulder, and his career strangely impeded. He had just time to perceive that a lasso had been thrown over him, which would confine his arms, when he saw himself suddenly surrounded, and was rushed upon by a number of men. He instantly recognised the voice of Hinch shouting, "Down with him! Drag him down!" as the men who had hold of the lasso about his body jerked at it violently in the effort to throw him. All his tremendous strength was put forth in one convulsive effort, which would have freed him, but that the infernal noose had fallen true, and bound his arms. As it was, he dragged the six stout men who held it after his frantic bounds nearly to his own door before he was prostrated, and then it was by a heavy blow dealt him over the head with the butt of a gun. The last objects which met his eye as he sank down were the horrified faces of his two children and wife looking out upon him.

The blow deprived him of his senses for some time, and, when he recovered, he found himself half stripped and lashed to a tree a short distance from his house—Hinch in front of him with a knotted rope in his hand, his wife on the ground, wailing and clinging with piteous entreaty round the monster's knees, his children weeping by her, and, outside this group, a circle of men with guns in their hands. That fearful awakening was a new birth to Jack Long! His eye took in everything at one glance. A shudder, like that of an oak rifling to its core, sprang along his nerves, and seemed to pass out at

his feet and through his fingers, leaving him as rigid as marble ; and when the blows of the hideous mocking devil before him fell upon his white flesh, making it welt in purple ridges, or spout dull black currents, he felt them no more than the dead lintel of his door would have done ; and the agony of that poor wife shrilling a frantic echo to every harsh slashing sound seemed to have no more effect upon his ear than it had upon the tree above them, which shook its green leaves to the self-same cadence they had held yesterday in the breeze. His wide-open eyes were glancing calmly and scrutinizingly into the faces of the men who stood around—those features are never to be forgotten !—for, while Hinch lays on the stripes with all his furious strength, blaspheming as they fall, that glance dwells on each face with a cold, keen, searching intensity, as if it marked them to be remembered in hell ! The man's air was awful—so concentrated, so still, so enduring. He never spoke, or groaned, or writhed—but those intense eyes of his ! the wretches couldn't stand them, and began to shuffle and get behind each other. But it was too late ; he had them all—ten men ! They were registered.

We will drop the curtain over this horrible scene. Suffice it to say that, after lashing him until he fainted, the Regulators left him, telling his wife that if they were not out of the country in ten days he should be shot. He did go within the specified time ; and, as it was said, returned with his family to Arkansas, where his wife's father lived. The

incident was soon forgotten in Shelby county amidst the constant recurrence of similar scenes.

About four months after this affair, in company with an adventurous friend, I was traversing Western Texas. Our objects were to see the country, and amuse ourselves in hunting for a time over any district we found well adapted for a particular sport—as for bear hunting, deer hunting, buffalo hunting, &c. Either of these animals is to be found in greater abundance, and, of course, pursued to greater advantage, in peculiar regions; and, as we were anxious to make ourselves familiar with all the modes of life in the country, we made it a point, in passing through, to stop wherever the promise of anything specially interesting offered itself. Prairies, timber, and water were better distributed in Shelby than any county we had passed through—the timber predominating over the prairie, though interlaid by it in every direction. This diversity of surface attracted a greater variety and quantity of game, as well as afforded more perfect facilities to the sportsman. Indeed, it struck us as a perfect hunter's paradise; and, my friend happening to remember a man of some wealth, who had removed from his native county and settled, as he had understood, in Shelby, we inquired for him, and very readily found him.

Whatever else may be said or thought of the Texans, they are unquestionably most generously hospitable. We were frankly and kindly received, and horses, servants, guns, dogs, and whatever else

was necessary to ensure our enjoyment of the sports of the country, as well as the time of our host himself, were forthwith at our disposal, and we were soon, to our hearts' content, engaged in every character of exciting chase.

One day we had all turned out for a deer-drive. This hunt, in which dogs are used for driving the game out of the timber, scatters the hunters very much; they are stationed at the different "stands," which are sometimes miles apart, to watch for the deer passing out; and, for this reason, the party seldom gets together again until night. We divided in the morning, and skirted up opposite sides of a wide belt of bottom timber, while the "drivers" and dogs penetrated it to rouse the deer, which ran out on either side by the stands which were known to the hunters. We were unusually successful, and returned to a late dinner at our host's, the planter's house. By dusk all had come in except my friend, whose name was Henry, and a man named Stoner, one of the neighbours, who had joined our hunt. Dinner was ready, and we sat down to it, supposing they would be in in a few moments. The meal was nearly over when Henry, who was a gay, voluble fellow, came bustling into the room, and, with a slightly flurried manner, addressed our host:—"Squire, this is a strange country of yours! Do you let crazy people range it with guns in their hands?"

"Not when we know it. Why? What about crazy people? You look excited."

"Well, I think I've had enough to make me feel a little curious."

"What is it? what is it?" exclaimed everybody eagerly.

"Why, I have met with either the old Harry himself, a ghost, or a madman, and which it is I am confoundedly puzzled to tell!"

"Where? How?"

He threw himself into a chair, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, and continued:—"You know, Stoner and myself, when we parted from you all this morning, took up the right-hand side of the bottom timber. Well, Stoner accompanied me to my 'stand,' where we parted, he to go on to his; and I have seen nothing of him since. Soon after he left me a deer passed out—I shot it, wounded it, and jumped on my horse to pursue it. The deer had staggered at my fire, but was not so badly wounded as I supposed, and led me off, until it suddenly occurred to me that I might get lost, and I reined up; but I soon found that this sober second thought had come too late, and that I was already out of my latitude. I wandered about nearly all day, though taking care not to go very far in one direction, before I came across anything which promised to set me right again. I at last came upon a waggon trail, and felt relieved, for I knew it must take me to some point where I could get information. The trail was narrow, leading through scrubby thickets; and I was riding along slowly, looking down, in the hope of detecting the

tracks of some of your horses, when the violent shying of my horse caused me to raise my eyes. And, by George! it was enough to have 'stampeded' a whole regiment of horse! On the left of the trail stood a very tall skeleton-like figure, dressed in skins, one foot advanced, as if he had stopped in the act of stepping across it, and a long heavy gun, just swinging down to the level, bearing on me. Of course my heart leaped into my throat, and my flesh shrank and crept. Before I could think of raising my gun, my eyes met those of this strange figure; and such eyes! Surprise at their cold, unnatural expression suspended my action: burning with a chill, singular brilliancy, in deep-sunken sockets, they looked as if they never had winked. Dwelling steadily upon my face for a moment, they seemed to be satisfied, and the gun was slowly thrown back upon his shoulders; and, plucking at a long grisly beard with an impatient gesture of his bony hands, the figure made a stride across the trail, and, without speaking a word, plunged into the thicket. I was so confounded by this curious dumb show that he was nearly concealed in the brush before I found my tongue to shout to him to stop; but he kept on, not even turning his head. I was provoked, and spurred my horse in after him as far as I could penetrate; but he kept on and I lost sight of him in a moment, and whether he can talk at all or not is more than I can tell."

"Did you look at his feet, Henry?" interrupted one of the party. "I expect it was old——"

"Never mind what you expect—hear me out," continued. "I followed the trail which wound about it seemed to me, towards all the points of the compass, for an hour or more, when at last it led me out into a prairie which I thought I recognised. I stopped and was looking around to make out the landmarks, when a horse with a saddle on burst from the woods behind me, and tore off across the prairie, as if he, too, had seen the devil."

"What colour was he?" exclaimed half a dozen voices in a breath.

"He was too far off for me to distinguish more than he was a dark horse—say about as much so as mine. I could distinguish the pommel of the saddle and the stirrups flying!"

"Stoner's horse was a dark bay," was buzzed around the table in low tones, every one looking seriously in his neighbour's face.

"Yes!" said the squire, rising and stepping uneasily to the window. "Stoner's horse was a good deal like yours; he must have got away from him, and that is what detains him. But then the nag was a very kind creature, and well trained. I wonder it should have behaved so!"

"Don't believe 'bay' would have done it, squire," said one of the men. "Something's gone wrong, I think! Was the bridle down, Mr. Henry?"

"It was too far off for me to tell. I followed in the direction the horse took, and soon found myself here, and expected to find it here too!"

"No! Stoner's beyond here," said the squire. "That waggon trail you were turning and twisting about in is a road I had opened to a number of board trees we cut and rived out there; you might have followed it for hours and not been more than a mile or so from the place you started from. That ghost of yours, by the way, may be some crazy fellow, who has wandered off into these parts with mischief in him! Did you hear no gun?"

"I thought I did—about an hour after parting with that man, or devil, or whatever he was; but the sound was so faint and distant, that, for fear I might be mistaken, I did not go to it; and the road had turned so frequently, I could not tell whether it was in the direction he went off or not."

Here the "driver" interposed, saying that he had heard a rifle about that time on the right, but, supposing it to be Henry or Stoner, he thought nothing of it. And a half-laughing discussion followed as to the probable character of the wood ghost Henry had reported of—some asserted that he was quizzing us—for these men were too much accustomed to the exigencies of a hunter's life to be for more than a moment seriously affected by the circumstance of Stoner's non-arrival. In the midst of this, a horse's feet were heard galloping up to the door, and a loud "Hilloa!" followed. The squire rose hastily and went out. In a moment after he entered, looking pale and excited.

"Tom Dix (one of Stoner's neighbours) says that

his horse has come without a rider, the reins upon neck, and a clot of blood upon the pommel of the saddle! Boys! he's been shot! Just as I suspect from the first!"

Everybody rose at this announcement—looking in the face of him opposite with a blank pallid stare.

"The crazy man!" ejaculated several.

"Strange!"—"Very mysterious!" said others.

"I tell you what," said the squire, after a pause, "has struck me from the first. It is that this strange-looking fellow Henry saw mistook him for Stoner, until he looked into his face—for Henry's horse and general appearance are not unlike his—and, when he found that he was wrong, got out of the way and went on till he met Stoner himself, and has shot him!"

"No doubt of it!" said several.

"But it's a very mysterious affair," continued he. "I know of no such looking man in this region as Henry describes; but at any rate he will be hunted down to-morrow, for Stoner was one of the Regulators, and Hinch is a perfect bloodhound. He can hardly escape him—crazy or not crazy!"

This seemed to be the most satisfactory solution of the difficulty, and, as it was too dark for us to do anything that night, we resumed our seats to discuss over and over again these details; while the squire sent off a messenger, summoning Hinch and the Regulators to be on the ground early in the morning.

Before sunrise in the morning Hinch arrived with six men. I was waked by his loud blustering and swearing. He was raving, as I afterwards understood, about Henry, calling his story about the meeting with the remarkable personage all humbug, and asserting his belief that, if a murder had been committed, Henry was its author. Our host quieted him in some way, and when we came out to join them he greeted us with a snarling sort of civility. He was a thick-set, broad-shouldered, burly-looking wretch, with blood-shot eyes, and face bearing all the marks of riotous debauchery! Our search was for several hours entirely unsuccessful, until Henry by accident found the place where he had encountered the Bearded Ghost, as some one christened him. Here one of the keen-eyed hunters found the traces of a large mocassined foot. These were pursued for several miles and lost. But, on spreading our line and continuing the same general course for some distance farther, we at last found, indeed, the body of Stoner! It had been so much mutilated by the wolves and ravens that little examination was made of the bones. We gathered them together to carry them home to his family, and in doing this I noticed the fracture of a bullet through the back of the skull. It had been stripped bare of flesh, and both eyes plucked out by the birds, and was too shocking an object for close examination. But what puzzled all parties most was the discovery, a short distance off, of the trail of a shod

horse. Now, there was, perhaps, not a horse in Shelby county that wore shoes, and certainly not one in our party. Shoeing is never thought of being unnecessary where there are no stones. This was as perfect a poser as even Henry's story, and threw yet a greater air of inexplicability around the affair! It was thought that this track might be easily traced to any distance; but, after worrying about it for several days, it was given up in despair, and the Regulators, fatigued and disheartened, scattered for their respective homes.

But one of their number never reached his. Being missed for two days, there was a general turnout to look for him, and, as had been the case with Stoner, his body was found torn to pieces by the wolves. The report was, that he, too, had been shot through the back of the head.

These murders, and the singular circumstances accompanying them, created great sensation. Hinch and his troops scoured the country in every direction, arresting and lynching suspicious persons, as they called them. One poor, inoffensive fellow they hung and cut down four or five times, to make him confess; but nothing was elicited; and they left him with barely a spark of life.

That evening, as they were returning to their head-quarters at the store, one of them, named Winter, missed a portion of his horse furniture, which had become accidentally detached. He said he had observed it in its place a mile back, that he

would return to get it, and rejoin them at the store by the time they should be ready to commence the spree they had determined on going into that night. He left them, and never returned. They soon got drunk, and did not particularly notice his absence until some time the next day, when his family, alarmed by the return of his horse with an empty saddle, sent to inquire after him. This sort of inquiries had come to be so significant of late that they were instantly sobered, and, mounting, rode back on their trail. Very soon a swarm of buzzards and wolves, near a line of thicket ahead, designated the whereabouts of the object of their search; and there they found his fleshless bones scattered on every side. They were appalled! The reddest-bloated cheek among them blanched! It was terrible! They seemed to be doomed! Three of their number dead and torn to pieces within ten days, and yet not the slightest clue to the relentless and invisible foe, but that ghostly story of Henry's, and the tracks which only served to tantalize them! It must be some dread supernatural visitation of their hideous crimes! They shivered, while the great drops started from their foreheads, and, without thinking of looking for any trail, or even gathering up the bones, they started back at full speed, spreading the alarm everywhere. The excitement now became universal and tremendous. Nearly the whole country turned out for the pur-

pose of unravelling this alarming mystery; and the superstitious frenzy was in no small degree heightened by the report that this man had been shot in the same way as the others—in the *back of the head!*



CHAPTER III.



THESE incidents were all so unaccountable, that I own I felt no little sympathy with the popular association of a supernatural agency in their perpetration. Henry laughed at all this, but insisted that it was a maniac; and, to account for the peculiar dexterity of his escapes and whole management, related many anecdotes of the proverbial cunning of madmen. The wildest, most absurd, and incredible stories were now afloat among the people concerning this deadly and subtle foe of the Regulators, for it was now universally believed and remarked that it was against them alone that his enmity was directed. The story of Henry was greatly

improved upon and added to ; and, as some reports had it, the madman—as others, the bearded ghost—was seen in half-a-dozen places at the same time ; now on foot, stalking with enormous strides across some open glade from thicket to thicket, passing out of sight again before the observer could recover from his surprise : then, mounted, he was seen flying like the shadow of a summer cloud over the prairies, or beneath the gloom of forests, always haggard and lean, dressed in skins with the hair on, and that long heavy, terrible rifle on his shoulder ! I noticed that there was only one class of men who ventured to assert that they had actually seen with their own eyes these wonderful sights, and that was constructed of those who either had suffered, or from their character and pursuits were most likely to suffer persecution from the Regulators—the class of hunter emigrants. These men were most industrious in embellishing all the circumstances of character, feats, and relentless hatred to the Regulators, as highly as the excited credulity of the public would bear. They never saw him except in the vicinity of the homes of some one of these hated tyrants. In their versions this being was for ever hovering around them, waiting the moment to strike while they were alone and far from any help.

They carried this thing so far as to attract attention to it, and arouse in the cunning mind of Hinch the same suspicion which had occurred to Henry and myself, namely, that all this was the result of

a profoundly acute and thoroughly organized scheme of this class, headed by some man of peculiar personalities and consummate skill, with the object of exterminating or driving off the Regulators. It seemed impossible that, without collusion with many others, the murderer should have been able to so baffle all pursuit. Hinch and his band had been thoroughly cowed and awed; but, the moment this idea occurred to them, the reaction of their base fears was savage exultation. Here was something tangible; their open and united force could easily exterminate an enemy who had acknowledged their weakness in resorting to secret combination and assassination from "the bush"! They forthwith proclaimed "war to the knife" with the whole class; and during the next week several outrages, so revolting that I will not detail them, were perpetrated upon these men in different parts of the county; and the fact that, during this general tumult, nothing more was seen or heard of the mysterious rifleman, encouraged them with the belief that they had succeeded in getting rid of him through the intimidation of his confederates.

They had now been for nearly a fortnight in the saddle, had glutted themselves with vengeance, and, as they conceived, broken down this dangerous conspiracy against their power; and, if they had not succeeded in detecting and punishing, had at least frightened off their singular foe. They now concluded they might safely disband. That day, after

they separated one of their number, named Rees—almost as bad and savage a man as Hinch himself—was riding past a thicket, in sight of his own house, when he was shot from it. His negroes heard the gun, and seeing his horse galloping up to the house, riderless and snorting wildly, they ran down, and found him stretched in the road dead. *He was shot in the eye*, and the ball passed out at the back of his head.

When Hinch heard this, he turned perfectl^y livid, his knees smote together, and, with a horribl^e oath, he exclaimed, "It's Jack Long, or his ghost^s by G——, come back for vengeance!" It was now perceived, for the first time, that all the men had been shot through the eye, instead of in the back of the head, where the ball had only passed out after entering at the socket. The other heads had been too unpleasantly mutilated for examination, and this fact had not been before observed. Of course everybody was satisfied now that this terrible being was in one way or another identified with Jack Long; for the notoriety of his favourite mark and his matchless skill instantly occurred to all, as accounting for much that was unaccountable in these occurrences. This produced a great change in public feeling. The better sort began to conceive that they understood the whole matter. The lynching Jack had received was fresh in their memories, and they supposed that its severity had shaken his mental balance and made him a monomaniac, and that the disease had endowed

him with the marvellous cunning, the stanch, murderous hate, and the unnatural appearance which had created such a sensation. They could not understand how a being so simple-hearted and sluggish as he was reputed to have been could have been roused or stung to such deeds by the mere depth and power of his natural passions. But, monomaniac or not, such a vengeance, and the daring conduct of the whole affair, were very imposing to their associations and prepossessions, and they sympathized heartily with him. It was only while the general uncertainty left every man in doubt whether his own person might not be next the object of this murderous aim that the public were disposed to back the Rangers in whatever violent measures they might choose to resort to to drag the secret to light and the actor to punishment; but, now that it was apparent his whole hate was levelled against the Rangers, and all that uncertainty was confined to them, be he devil, ghost, madman, or Jack Long, the public had no intention of interfering again. It was a personal issue between him and them—they might settle it between themselves! Indeed, men felt in their inmost hearts that every man of the ten engaged in the lynching of Jack Long deserved a dozen times over to be shot; and now they looked on coolly, rather enjoying the thing, and earnestly hoping that Jack might have the best of it.

And of this there seemed to be a strong probability; for the Regulators made only one more

attempt to get together ; but, another of their number being killed on his way to the rendezvous, his body bearing that well-known and fearful signature of skill, the remaining five, perfectly unnerved and overcome with terror, retreated to their houses and scarcely dared for several weeks to put their heads outside their own doors.

The class to which Jack belonged, at least those of them who had managed to keep a footing during the relentless proscription of the Regulators, now began to look up, and hinted that they had known of Jack's return from the time of Stoner's murder, and had aided and abetted his purposes in every way in their power ; furnishing him with fresh horses when the noble animal he rode back from the States became fatigued ; assisting his flights and concealments, and furnishing him with information, as well as spreading the exaggerated stories about him. One bluff old fellow remarked :—


“ You are fools who talk about Jack's being crazy ! He's as calm and cold as a frosty morning in old Kentuck, and his head is as clear as a bell ; he's just got his Indian-fightin' and Tory-hatin' blood waked up in him by them stripes ! That's a blood you know that's dangersomer than a catamount when it once gets riz ! ”

Jack was now frequently seen ; but it was known that his work was only half done, and that he meant to finish it, and he was regarded with great curiosity and awe. The five wretched men were entirely un-

strung and panic-stricken. They made no attempt at retaliation, but all their hopes seemed to lie in the effort to get out of his reach. That long heavy rifle haunted them day and night. They saw its dark muzzle bearing on them from every bush, and through the chinks of their own cabins!

One of them named White, who was an inveterate toper, with all his terror could not resist his inclination for liquor; and, after a confinement in his house for nearly three weeks, determined to risk all and go to the store and buy him a barrel. He went in a covered waggon, driven by a negro, while he lay stretched on the bottom in the straw. The barrel of liquor was obtained—he got into the waggon—lay down beside it, and started for home. All the way he never raised his head until near the mouth of his lane; a log had been placed on the side of the road which tilted up the waggon in passing over it, so as to roll the barrel on him. He forgot his caution, and sprang up with his head out of the cover to curse the boy for his carelessness, and at that moment a rifle was discharged. He fell back dead—*shot through the eye!* The boy said that his master suddenly cut short his oaths, and exclaimed, “There he is!” at the moment the gun fired. He saw a tall man with a beard hanging down on his breast, and dressed in skins, walking off through the bush with his rifle on his shoulder.

The next man, named Garnet, about two
after this, got up one morning about sun-



in his shirt sleeves stepped to his door and threw open to breathe fresh air. He was rubbing his eyes being about half asleep; and, when he got the door fairly open, there stood the gaunt avenger beside a tree in the yard—the fatal rifle levelled, and waiting till his victim should see him distinctly. He did see him—but it was with his last look. The bullet went crashing through his brain. Long is said to have told one of his friends that he never in a single instance shot one of the men till he was certain the man saw and recognised him fully.

All were gone now but Hinch and the two young men of the party, Williams and Davis. The latter were permitted to escape. Whether it was from relenting on the part of the dread avenger, that he had observed some trifling thing in the demeanour on the occasion of the outrage he was thus punishing which recommended them to mercy now that his resentment had so deeply drunk of the bitter delight of atonement, or that, in his anxiety to secure Hinch, he confined his efforts and watchfulness to him alone, I do not know. They made a forced and secret sale of their property, and cleared out during the night. But it was for Hinch he had with passionless calculation reserved the most inconceivable torture. He had passed him by this time, while one after the other he struck down the tools and companions of his crime.

He doomed him to see them falling around him

with the certain knowledge that the avenging hate which slew them burned with tenfold intensity for his life—that it must and would have it! But when would the claim be made? Should he be the next one? No. The next one? No! But then each succeeding death so sure to take one of their number drove away every sophistry of hope, and realized to him in bare and sterner horror that his own fate was as fixed as theirs. As each one fell away the circle of doom was narrowed—slowly, steadily, closing, in about him. Soon there would be no one left but him! How could he call an hour his own? When could he feel safe? That relentless subtlety had baffled them all! One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, strong men had all gone down before that fearful rifle—*every one of them shot through the eye!* God of heavens! and the sharp agony would spangle keen points of burning light through his brain, as if the ball were already bursting through a socket. “I, too, must be shot through the eye!” Horror! It was worse than ten thousand deaths, and he died them in lingering tortures told over day by day.

From the time of Rees’s death, he looked a changed and a stricken man. In a few weeks he had lost a great deal of flesh, and became piteously haggard—his eyes and gait and voice were all humble. His turbulent and fierce animality faded before the harrowing suspense of this fear. The bully and murderous ruffian trembled at the rustling of a leaf. His own imagination became his hell; and hungry re-

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morse grew stronger and stronger with feasting at his heart! He never left his house for weeks, until the escape of Williams and Davis inspired him with some hope. He procured a fine horse, and set off one dark night for the Red River! Everybody regretted his escape—for men had looked in quiet expectation upon the progress of this affair, and in strong faith that the sense of wild border justice would be gratified in seeing this stern, righteous, and unparalleled vengeance consummated by the fall of Hinch—the monster instigator and chief actor in all the grievous outrages which had roused the simple-hearted Long into a demon executioner of doom.

Hinch reached the bank of the Red River, sprang from his foaming and exhausted horse, after looking cautiously around, and threw himself upon the grass to wait for a steam-boat. In two hours he heard one puffing down the stream, and saw the white wreaths of steam curling up behind the trees. How his heart bounded! Freedom, hope, and life, once more sprang through his shrivelled veins and to his lips. He signalled the vessel: she rounded to and lowered her yawl. His pulse bounded high, and he gazed with absorbing eagerness at the crew as they pulled lustily towards the shore. A click—behind him! He turned, with a shudder, and *there he was!* That long rifle was bearing straight upon him—those cold eyes dwelt steadily upon him for a moment—and crash! all was for ever blackness to Hinch the Regulator! The men who witnessed this singular scene landed, and found

him *shot through the eye*; and saw the murderer galloping swiftly away over the plain stretching out from the top of the bank! And so the vengeance was consummated, and the stern hunter had wiped out with much blood the stain of stripes on his free limbs, and could now do, what I was told he had never done since the night of those fatal and fatally expiated stripes, look his wife again in the eyes, and receive her form to rest again upon his breast.

It was an awful deed. In view of all its circumstances, the provocation, the character of Long, the deranging influence of the outrage upon the brain, though no other indication appeared of impaired sanity, the mind is lost in uncertainty as to the judgment which should be passed upon it. He did not remain in Shelby county; but in what direction he had intended to go, after returning to Arkansas for his wife and children, I could never hear. He is probably living now his old quiet and good-natured life in the heart of the green wilderness; and it is as likely as not that one of those two chubby boys who rolled with him about the floor of his log cabin on that memorable night of which I have simply related the events and the consequences will some of these days come to Washington from congressional districts beyond the Rocky Mountains.

A GLANCE AT BERNE.



BERN, in old German, or rather in the Suabian dialect, signifies a bear. It is built on a lofty sandstone promontory, formed by the winding course of the Aar, which almost surrounds it, flowing at the bottom of a deep gully, with steep and precipitous sides. The distant aspect of the town, planted on this elevated platform, 1600 feet above the sea, is very imposing, and its interior has a peculiarly solid and striking appearance, owing to all the houses being built of massive stone, almost all of them resting on arcades, which furnish covered walks on both sides of the streets, and are lined with shops and walls; but the lowness of these arches, and the thickness of the buttresses which support them, render the colonnades close and gloomy. The streets abound in *fountains* and *rills of water*, that run in all directions, cooling and purifying the atmosphere. One of these, called the *Kinderfresser-Brunnen* (Ogre's Fountain), received its name from a figure (probably Saturn) devouring a child, with others stuck in his girdle and pockets. Other fountains are supported by armed warriors.

The great charm of Berne is the view of the Bernese Alps, which the town and every eminence in its neighbourhood commands in clear weather. This is

beautifully seen from the Platform—a lofty terrace, planted with shady rows of trees overhanging the Aar, from which more than a dozen snowy peaks of the great chain are visible. There is not a more sublime sight than this view at sunset, especially at times when, owing to a peculiar state of the atmosphere, the slanting rays are reflected from the alpine snows in hues of glowing pink. The *Platform* itself rises 108 feet above the Aar; yet an inscription on the parapet records that a young student, mounted on a spirited horse, which was frightened by some children, leaped the precipice. The horse was killed on the spot, but its rider only received a few broken ribs.

The *Museum*, which is open to the public three times a week, and to strangers at all times by a small fee, contains one of the finest collections of the natural productions of Switzerland.

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY.



“THIRTEEN pounds a year!” said Kate Lawson, looking hard in her sister’s face as she spoke, “thirteen pounds a year, why, it is a mere nothing for house rent, and then our expenses will not be much; surely, with even half-a-dozen pupils, we might manage to make a beginning.” The other girl smiled feebly as she answered, “If we could believe Mrs. Toms, our succeeding is certain; but, somehow, I have no faith in her, and doubt her friendship as much as I do her generosity; but as we must endeavour at something while we have funds to commence with, and as this appears the only opening, perhaps we had

better close with the man, and take the house before any one else anticipates our speculation."

The speakers were the orphan daughters of a Government officer, who, with the usual improvidence of his class, had lived not only up to his income, but beyond it; leaving his children nurtured in all the delicacy of independence, utterly helpless to meet the trials inevitable on its loss. With him had died not only their worldly position, but the absolute means of support; and though neither of the sisters were deficient in energy and perseverance, even these positive virtues, wanting a right direction and the government of prudence, became negatived in effect. The Mrs. Toms alluded to was the wife of a retired tradesman, upon the debtor's side of whose account-book Mr. Lawson's name unfortunately figured; but, during his lifetime, they had compromised their claims as creditors, for the sake of being tolerated as acquaintance by persons in a sphere of society several shades of gentility above their own. Weak, vain, and deficient in mental qualities; in all the intricacies of cunning, and hard-handed dealings of selfishness, Mrs. Toms was a match for the most worldly wise; and finding that the Lawsons could be of no farther use in pushing her into the society it was her ambition to belong to, and knowing the strictly honourable principles of these young persons, it occurred to her that, in losing the advantages their acquaintance had previously been, there was no necessity for losing sight of their small account, especially as they still possessed a

few trinkets and articles of plate, which she imagined might very profitably (so far as she was concerned) be made the medium of paying their father's debt. She knew there was no law but that of their own integrity to enforce its payment, but it was upon this she calculated; and, actuated solely by these views, had moved them to take a step that, by bringing them in close proximity with herself, satisfied her that, if the speculation they proposed succeeded, she should be the first to profit by it; and if otherwise, and ruin brought about the sale of their effects, she still would have the first chance of having her claims attended to. Such was Mrs. Toms, whose turn it had now become to play the patroness, and to whose advice, in the absence of other counsel, and their anxiety to commence their new duties of self-support, they had unfortunately listened.

Every one remembers the severe winter of '40. Well, it was in the middle of the November of this year that the inhabitants of Elmstead first observed that a certain notice of disoccupancy, and a desire to receive fresh tenants, that had been posted for at least two years on the outside of a house belonging to John Thorndyke, the village blacksmith, had absolutely disappeared, as well as its duplicate from the gable end of the forge. Yes, the house was actually let, but to whom, and for what, no one appeared to know; report put into it a widow and her daughter, a new dressmaker, and a dentist, in succession, neither of whom turned out to be the

true party or profession; at length it appeared two sisters had taken it with the idea of speculating in a school. Now, Elmstead was already in possession of "Holly-house Establishment for Young Ladies;" but the terms of the proprietress having grown with her success, while her attention had proportionably diminished, a falling-off of her pupils had ensued, and with the parents of those who remained great dissatisfaction existed. These circumstances had given a show of probability to Mrs. Toms' plan for the Misses Lawson; and, ready to snatch at any scheme that offered a prospect of a livelihood, they had at once ventured on the attempt, not indeed without some absolute promises of support, but these the ladies of Elmstead kept *sub rosa*. The house in question was situated in the centre of the village, and differed from its tile-roofed, rough-dashed compeers, in taking a perpendicular form instead of the lateral one that predominated; and in having two glazed sash-windows in front, instead of the primitive diamond-paned lattices that generally prevailed. In this matter, however, the landlord had taken care to turn the best side outwards; for in the rear the original casements remained, and in the bedroom as well as kitchen the old leaden framework gaped and shook, till the driving half-frozen showers and gusty winds of mid-winter made themselves felt in every part of the old tenement; but hope kept the hearts of its young occupants warm, and with the bustle of putting their own house in order, and their

anticipations with regard to their projected enterprise, created a present and expectant excitement that made them indifferent to such trifling discomforts. Days, alas! weeks passed away, and not a single inquiry had been made touching the intended school; circulars had been duly dispensed throughout the village and its vicinity, yet no result ensued; the very parties who had promised their patronage (through Mrs. Toms) recanted their dissatisfaction of Holly-house and its proprietress, and owned to an error of judgment in conceiving another school necessary; and the meaning of this change on slowly made its way to the victims of it. Poor girls! in the guilelessness of simple honesty they had been injudicious enough to make choice of a habitation more in keeping with their present mean and uncertain expectations, than a competition establishment to Holly-house. Who, then, could think of sending girls who had begun their education at this high-sounding seminary, to continue at a mere cottage in its neighbourhood? Pshaw! it was preposterous; the Misses Lawson might understand teaching, but, really, this was not the way to get supported; they should have taken "Ivy-house," at the other end of the street—erected a rival showboard—gone in debt for furniture, and hired servants and not have allowed people to see that necessity instead of that bland love of "devoting oneself to the education of a select number of young ladies" (that occasionally poetizes those otherwise dry affairs

newspaper advertisements), had engendered the idea. To be sure, the rich brewer's wife had told the blacksmith's daughter that she had no objection to allow the Misses Lawson to become the a, b, c darians (as that individual reported it) of her younger children; but it was impossible she could think of creating a laugh against the elder ones amongst their old schoolfellows, by sending them to such a place as the Lawsons had taken; she was by no means pleased with her daughters' progress at Hollyhouse; indeed, had determined to remove them; but she would rather send them miles away, than have the other girls crow over them.

In the meantime, now that the arrangements of the Lawsons' four rooms were completed,—the furniture placed and replaced, till there was no possibility of improving its effect—not another tack required to make the carpet fit exactly—not a variety of position in which the chairs could be placed to greater advantage—the couch drawn up to the very azimuth of fireside comfort—the curtains falling in the prettiest folds—not even the situation of a picture or the place of a book to alter for the better—and all looking so clean and neat that, in spite of the stilted chimney-piece and the beam across the ceiling, it really did look snug and home-like; not, indeed like the home of their better fortune—their father's home; but, like the home of exigence, self-made, and with a feeling about it of present shelter, and even comfort, that made the sisters draw close to the clean-swept

evening hearth, with a feeling almost like that with which we used to sit with Crusoe in his warm, well-matted cave. But, as I was saying, when everything was in its place, the last touch effected, and the domestic economy of their little household proceeding regularly and calmly, then came long hours of wearying incertitude, of fruitless expectation, and, finally the bursting of the bubble hope, and for a time the inaction of despair. But the elastic spirit of youth soon rebounds from such depression; and, after calling on such of the inhabitants as had withdrawn their children from Holly-house, either from real dissatisfaction, or with solely (I have known it done) the economical motive of saving the short quarter, it became apparent that without altering their plan and making themselves answerable for expenses which they had no present means of meeting, they must lay aside all hopes of succeeding in a school. The Elmstead people had their prejudices; and a large house and full-grown brass plate, were indispensably connected with their ideas of a respectable "*ludus literarius*." What was to be done? They had taken their house for so many months certain—an agreement which their landlord had fully made up his mind not to cancel. Why should he? If they had not money; they had money's worth; therefore, he would not particularly press them the first quarter; even if the rent was not forthcoming to the day, it would be easy any time to distrain. It was very sad to be sure, for the poor young people to have attempted so unfor-

tunate a speculation ; but if they did not succeed, that was their look-out, not his.

In the meanwhile his friendless tenants resolved, between themselves, how to escape the waste of their small capital. If they continued to live upon it, by the time they would be free to leave Elmstead, they would be without the means of entering upon anything else, or probably the power of removing. In this dilemma, the idea of business—of profit—of turning shillings into pounds, by the seemingly simple process of passing them across a counter—occurred to them ; and though without the least practical knowledge of trade, and (if the truth must be told) an absolute aversion to it, they were willing to try any scheme that appeared to promise the means of support. When I say an aversion to trade, I do not allude to any sickly prejudices of false pride, that would rather cling a burden on the cold, shame-extorted bounty of relatives and friends, than turn to such a means of independence. Sorrow and poverty had sifted their hearts of affectation : it was the natural reluctance of women brought up without the contemplation of such a possibility, and whose habits and education opposed themselves to the necessary sacrifice of that reserve and seclusion that are the sweet privileges of sufficiency and a private home ; but necessity is too stern a compeller to be intimidated by the ghosts of mere distastes ; and yet, having curbed each upstart repugnance, and humbled themselves (as they believed) to her uncompromising ex-

actions, it was absurd, and yet pathetic, to see how a sort of natural refinement actuated them (unknown to themselves) in the very choice of a craft. Instead of the common-sense proceeding of laying in a stock of bacon and butter, Dutch cheese, crockery, and linsey-woolsey; warm comforters, woollen caps, and gaily-coloured handkerchiefs; old wives' gown pieces, and children's shoes and socks: to think of finessing with the fine arts, and in our working-day village to start a library, and hope for readers! I declare I have hardly patience to recount their oversight of *all* commercial policy. But a narrator of facts has *no* choice; and in the very teeth of the pertinent inquiry, "Who will read?" suggested by one sister to the other, the sapient affair was decided. To be sure the younger one, in the sanguineness of her imagination, had collected many arguments in favour of its success. There was nothing of the kind nearer than W—— (at least four miles from them); and what a convenience it would be to the residents on the adjacent heath, and the families at the Park and Moat-house! All these would be sure to read. Then there was the wealthier villagers; their opposite neighbour, the miller's sister, and the dressy young ladies at the Maypole; besides the inhabitants of the new houses at the other end of the hamlet, the exclusives of Belle-ville; then it was just the season for such a speculation,—long winter evenings, &c. In her estimation it could not help answering; and, as a climax, their friend, Mrs. Toms, highly approved of the plan.

Poor girl! had all the individuals whom she had conjured into her anticipated subscription list been inclined to give their support, there is little fear that the Elmstead library would have figured as a mere reminiscence; but she had forgotten that closeness of proximity is not always a desideratum with people who keep their carriages, and that mere convenience is a poor set-off to the attractions of a military market-town to country belles, with whom a walk of eight miles is bare exercise. But, to be brief, no sooner was the idea conceived than executed. A journey to town was undertaken by the elder sister; and, on the evening of the same day the Dover carrier was observed to leave certain weighty-looking packages at their door. Then their landlord, and their landlord's son, the carpenter, were seen going in and out, looking importantly mysterious, and as hard-mouthed as oysters. No information was to be gained from them, though something was evidently in hand; noises were heard after working hours; and it was remarked that the shutters of the ground-floor window had not been taken down for some days. At length, the arrangements being completed, the fact of a new shop duly developed itself; then came the grand affair of regulating it; there were shelves containing some five or six hundred volumes of second-hand library books, sundry reams of paper, dozens of ink, and hundreds of pens, with a variety of fancy articles, perfumery, &c.; in fact, a miniature of the legitimate stock of such establishments generally;

and which, from the hiatus it had made in the small reserve, seemed quite a large store to the proprietresses, and, with judicious placing, "did not (as they cheerily remarked to one another) "make so despicable a show." Then the window. It was managed over night, partly, that as first impressions (if favourable) are said to be decided of future preference, it might dazzle and attract by a *coup d'œil* and partly (if we must confess it) in the shrinking spirit of Lady Morgan's old gentlewoman, who, being reduced to the necessity of selling mutton-pies, would not rush down blind alleys, and other out-of-the-way places, and, after the faintest possible intimation of her ware, ejaculate, "I hope to God, nobody hears me!" It was a fine sparkling morning, with anticipation of December in the crisp footing and penetrating air, and just as the miller's sister was about to seat herself at her bachelor brother's breakfast-table, the shutters were removed, and quite a little splendour of bright colours and gaily-arranged articles burst from the little repository window, which sparkled and shone in all the newness and novelty of its attractions. Here the tempting frontispiece of a standard novel, and there the coloured plate of a juvenile publication, disclosed themselves; here we saw envelopes ingeniously affecting a fan in their arrangement, and there little pyramids of ink-bottles and alternating bars of black and red sealing-wax packets of adhesive wafers (too true to their title with *cachets de Paris*, and delicate little spangles

boxes of gold and silver ditto. Patience! what could these embryo *marchandes* have been thinking of? Then there was note-paper right royally adorned with profiles of Her Majesty and Prince Albert; small yellow and blue cases of steel nibs and tinted cards filled with the same, and pencils and pencil-brushes, and little pasteboard frames, with Berlin wool laid in compartments most delicately shaded, and silken purses of their own netting thrown lightly upon them. I think, too, that some of Finden's engravings were featly scattered amongst this regulated confusion; and that certain packs of playing-cards, and even a few quires of music-paper, existed in the establishment; there were also fragrant soaps, sachets, and perfumes (a little of each), and other trifles (too many, we may not say), but too scattered to be enumerated. Altogether the window was an unique composition in its way, and, early as it was (quite early, lest people should think they were not adapted for business), created quite a sensation, and immediately collected a crowd of clowns, old women, and children, who loudly vented their admiration of its extraordinary wares. In the meanwhile the sisters stood out of sight, blushing all over, and peeping stealthily with a foolish feeling, half gladness, half shame, at the curiosity their speculation awakened, and which they hoped, yet dreaded, would presently induce a customer. Alas! what could frozen-out clowns, hard-handed old women, and penniless children do for them? They watched and watched for

some time, till—yes!—there was a slight stir in crowd—an urchin lifted his finger to one of bespangled wafer-boxes—a separation ensued in close array, the primitive latch was lifted, and tiniest of the group, with the fearlessness peculiar innocence, forced his way into the arena without counter, and there standing still, held out a coin of humblest value in the realm, exclaiming—“Give a fardin’s-word of them-ere suckers,” pointing at same time to the vermilion sealing-wax. Altho his appearance had not filled them with any hope an important purchase, this was a terrible blow—earnest of their future disappointment; but just t emboldened by the fact of one of their number ha had the courage to enter, a boy of larger growth, green smock-frock and felt hat, rushed desperately and, asking the price of “Robinson Crusoe,” ru as desperately out again; then a matronly b attracted by a pair of china toilet jars, crossed threshold to inquire, “how much they asked for t two *mantel* ornaments?” and being informed, a r mur of disapprobation ensued at the dearness of t prices; in a word, after waiting a short time lon they began to think they might venture on going breakfast without fear of losing a customer, and c selling one another to keep an ear and eye on door, withdrew. Alas! their precautions were u necessary; hours passed away, and not a foot cro the threshold. Curiosity continued to be felt a rently as strongly as ever, for the crowd out

though ever changing, was ever present, one group succeeding to another, who, having finished their survey, made room for fresh, till the poor girls began to think it was their rude presence that kept more gentle customers away. Afternoon came—evening, and no coin had crossed the counter, or given a hope of future custom. “It has been so cold,” said one; “and no one as yet knows anything about it,” suggested the other—“we must be patient, and hope on.” But just then the miller’s sister who had kept a pretty sharp look-out from her seat on the sofa, to the appearances opposite, rose up as the maid took away the tea-things, and placing the inkstand and day-book on the table before her brother, whispered him, “I must just run over, and see what those poor girls are doing. I am pretty sure they have taken no money to-day, and it will not do for them to be disheartened at first starting.” So saying, Mrs. Allworth (she was called Mistress, though a maiden lady) slipped on her bonnet and shawl, and, with the activity of her cheerful disposition, tripped across the street, lightly, as if no physical suffering painfully held in her amiable haste—for she was lame—dear Mrs. Allworth—I can fancy her before me now, for the sunshine of her own excellence daguerrotyped her on my heart, and neither time nor distance has obliterated her image: she was a tall, fine-looking woman, robust, with a fresh colour and pleasing face, quick, clear, penetrating brown eyes, with a good space between them, and a breadth of forehead at once indicative of benevolence and

uprightness. There was something comforting in the very pressure of her hand—no slipping out of yours with a cold smoothness, as if covered with oiled silk—but a loving, warm, retaining clasp, kindly nervous and enduring, as her own strongly affectionate character. She was but the miller's sister, it is true, but what would the village have been without her? For the wounded in frame, as well as spirit, Mrs. Allworth had medicaments; she knew all mysteries of simples and stilled waters, and imparted the more generous remedies of wines and nutriments with a free heart and judicious hand. Too lame to walk for pleasure beyond the precincts of her own garden, or the outskirts of the squire's park adjoining it, this never impeded her visits to the poor or prevented her attendance at her place of worship. Simple, sincere, and overflowing with kindly impulses, there was in all that good she did no ostentation; on the contrary, she was one of those of whom it might be literally said, that her right hand knew not what her left hand did in the work of charity. Many an evening, through that long winter when the want of customers rendered light unnecessary in the deserted shop, and their shrinking exchequer hinted the wisdom of sitting without one as long as possible, how often have the transparent actions of that kind woman, and the little scenes enacted in her brother's flour store, given light and joy to the sister lonely bosoms!—her hand (and it was not a small one) heaping up and pressing down the measure of the necessitous—the side-slipped coin into the pal-

of poverty—the jugs of hot soup neatly covered and carried under the curtain of night to wherever cold and hunger kept their vigil. The sight of all this benevolence bade them not despair, for it proved that in the saddest circumstances a protecting Providence discovers itself, and, under some shape or other (more or less easily recognised), interposes in our behalf. Meanwhile the season deepened; the storms that devastated the coast, battled with trees, and church-spires, and chimneys inland; the snow set in, freezing as it fell, and being drifted from the surrounding hills, soon lay deep in our village valley. Coaches passed through it noiselessly, and but for the snoring of the smithy bellows, and the ringing stroke of the hammer on the anvil, you might have fancied yourself in some place which life and labour had deserted. Except when driven forth for absolute necessities, no one appeared in the street, and then they flitted by in strange, aged apparel, and fled back precipitately as ghosts overtaken by cock-crow. None of the local patronage they had calculated upon had been extended to our poor young speculators; their funds were fast exhausting; their goods (such of them, at least, as were exposed) spoiling; rent and taxes going on: while the weather no longer made it a matter of wonder to them, that scarcely any one had sufficient interest in their undertaking to cross their door-steps for the purpose of aiding in its support; in fact, it was but too evident that the shop was a failure, though it would have been better, indeed, to have owned it to

each other. Sometimes they attributed their want of patronage to the dead season of the year ; at others, fancied there had not yet been time to give the attempt a fair trial. Now they blamed the weather as the cause, and then the circumstance of the house standing back a little from the street. In a word, they would not totally despair.

Every morning the window appeared newly regulated, and (though the articles remained the same), like a kaleidoscope, with every change assumed a fresh and gayer combination ; but as the days became more gloomy, the cold more intense as the thick and yellow air penetrated within doors, making jaundice and melancholy the very atmosphere of their fire side, the ebbing away of hope might be as plainly traced in its altered aspect, as in the hearts of the poor girls themselves. Silently the dust and damp settled upon all its bright materials, dulling and defacing them—books fell down and were not replaced—the snow and rain penetrated, blotting out the gay colours, blistering the engravings, corroding whatever glittered, and slowly destroying all. No effort was made to arrest these effects—perseverance had become exhausted—hope had deserted them, and with the apathy of despair the sisters awaited the apparent consummation of their ruin. Let it not be supposed that there were not some who sincerely sympathised with them—good Mrs. Allworth, for instance, who, so far as her own endeavours and her influence with others went, had striven hard to find support for

them; but this was the work of a community, not of a few individuals, and therefore but of little use to them. Besides, their position (while it rendered their necessities more distressing) made it impossible to serve them in the practical and direct way one could do others; they not only continued a gentlewomanly exterior, but sustained before their friends a cheerfulness of demeanour that might well impose on them the belief that, though their hopes in business had failed, they still had immediate resources.

One saw the scanty fire, it is true; but who could dare to order them a supply of coals, when the moment one entered, with the best grace in the world, it was stirred into a blaze, and replenished liberally, as if there had been tons in the cellar, with what (but for our inopportune presence) would in all probability have been eked out till the morrow. And where was Mrs. Toms? suggests the reader: faithful as a remora to its prey, furnishing her desk and drawers, for years to come, in the articles of stationery, and whatever else made up the cream of their stock. She had induced them to move near her, for no other motive than to snatch from them the first-fruits of their enterprise; or, wanting these, to indemnify herself in some other way—the few pounds of a dead man's debt, which she feared (if at a distance) poverty might whisper them to withhold. Her friendship—oh! such friendship—had contented itself by distributing a few circulars in the first instance for them, and in inviting them to her house to entertain by

their musical powers any one else who happened to be there; but, as the evidences of their poverty became daily more apparent, even this pretended civility was abandoned, and her sole interest in them was to furnish herself as fast as possible with as many of their goods as would cover the few remaining pounds, shillings, and pence of her husband's account. Meanwhile, there is one little episode on which we have not trenched, but without which our story would be imperfect. Christmas was at hand, every housewife in the village busied in the amalgamation of mince-meat, or, at all events, the preparation of the plum-pudding; not a home, however humble, but exhibited some symptom of the approaching feast, while the butcher's shop and grocer's vied with a friendly rivalry in their relative attractions, the one overflowing with sweets, the other with fatness; prize sheep, and monster joints of stalled oxen, displayed themselves on the one hand, while luscious heaps of Malaga raisins, and the dark rich fruitage of Zante interspersed with cones of snowy sugar, pyramids of spice, and mounds of candied orange and lemon, all pranked about with laurel and the berry-holly, appeared on the show-board of the opposite "épiciier. But though no man meditated so unorthodox a proceeding as the enjoyment of the one without the other, the preponderance of his carnivorous nature showed itself in the disproportionate amount of admiration bestowed on the butcher's stall; green-coated country gentlemen, graziers in gaberdines, and la

bourers in smock-frocks, appeared equally to appreciate the merits of the exhibition, while the pursy-looking proprietor, great in the possession of unmatched mutton, and the purveyorship of genuine Baker-street beeves, flourishing in unopposed monopoly, stood gazing from the elevation of his doorstep at the triumph of his own dead cattle-show, now taking orders, now giving information as to breed, weight, feeding, &c., all the while accompanying his conversation with fitful and preparatory collisions of his knife and steel. But while all these indications of great doings in gastronomy pervaded Elmstead, the Lawsons found themselves as devoid of the means of procuring Christmas fare, as was that ingenious provider Mrs. Peck of ingredients for her annual pudding. Their position by this time seemed a hopeless one; another quarter's rent was due, and the only perceptible means of meeting it was by the disposal of their furniture, after which they must go forth separate and homeless, to meet whatever fortune awaited them. For many weeks they had lived *literally* "from hand to mouth," the trifle of money occasionally taken in the shop serving now to procure them a whole meal, and at other times the moiety of one. Experience had taught them the bitterest secrets of penury, and necessity initiated them into all her sad experiences; they had learnt to economize fuel by late rising, and to cheat appetite of a meal by making a late breakfast render the double service of dinner also. No wonder that health and

spirits under such a regimen had deserted them. Christmas, as I have said, was at hand—it was, in fact, the eve of the festival, and old associations, and memories suggested by them, and which grave-stones had not buried, rose up within the hearts of these desolate girls, as they cowered, pale and cold, before the wide, half-empty fire-place that seemed staring with a dull astonishment at its own want of those accessories to the season, the glowing yule-log, or, at least, the heaped-up fire. The one occupied the sofa, which was drawn as closely as possible to the unpromising hearth, and shivered in a paroxysm of ague, while the other, on a cushion by her side, sat gazing on her sharpened features and shrunk frame, till the sick girl, interpreting her look, drew her towards her, and, clasped in each other's arms, all the pent-up and heart-bursting despair which they had hitherto hidden (or had striven to hide) from one another broke forth, and for a while neither attempted to check the torrent of their mutual grief. An hour hence, faint, hopeless, and without the means of providing even necessities for the morrow, they were about to seek in sleep that oblivion of circumstances which their waking consciousness would not permit, when a loud knocking at the door disturbed them. A sudden hope occurred to the elder girl—it might be a purchaser! and if so, they might yet have wherewithal to provide for the ensuing day; but upon opening the door, instead of a customer, there stood the ostler of the “Maypole,” who,

l the stamping off the clods of snow from his shoes, lifted
was, in a weighty hamper, which the Dover coach, on its
ns, B way down, had dropped at the inn for them. "All
gras right, Miss," exclaimed the man, "carriage paid;"
arsa and he was almost gone before the astonished girl,
l co with an impulse more generous than prudent, had
rem placed her last sixpence in his hand.

un That there was no mistake was evident; the di-
-ly rection, in a bold but unknown handwriting, was
the certainly "Miss Lawson, Library, Elmstead;" and,
e P since she could not drag the hamper into her sister's
re presence, she instantly set about opening it. An
2 aroma of spice and fruit, mingled with another appe-
titive redolence, burst from it as she cut through the
packthread that closed its generous mouth. Why,
how was this? It was as if an angel had inventoried
their wants, and dropped it in the way of whatever
good and benevolent friend had thus furnished them.
There nestled all the rich items for their Christmas
pudding, and rearing itself above the amber straw,
breathing familiarly of wood smoke, appeared a ham
large enough to last them for months), and brown
and polished as mahogany. To lift this last from
the basket, rush up stairs, and, reckless of the table
cover, to lay it before the bewildered vision of her
sister, was the work of a minute. If their tears had
before flowed from despair, joy and gratitude made
them as irrepressible now; and while with clasped
hands they returned thanks for this intervention of
what appeared an express providence, lost themselves

in speculations as to the instrument of it. Again and again, re-assured and hopeful, they turned from contemplating the unlooked-for abundance so singularly bestowed on them, to embrace each other, and pray for their unknown and generous friend. At length Kate fell off to sleep, while the other took from a drawer a packet of letters in a firm, clear, and business-like hand, and drawing a shawl closely about her, sat down to read them instead of going to bed. The girl went through them slowly, sometimes big tears coursed down her face, and blistered the words that caused them; and at others her chilly cheek became damasked with a sense of self-shame and indignation at the wrong she had put on one, who had doubtless loved her in heart and truth, and whom, feeling and knowing him worthy of her love, she had in the vanity of her power slighted and ill-used. Bitterly (if that kind spirit could have felt revenge) was he vindicated; but this was a feeling his generous nature would never have coupled with her, on whom all the deep and strong affections of his heart had been irrevocably lavished. A distant kinsmen of her father's, Frank Townsend had been almost from boyhood an occasional visitor at their house, and from his fine disposition, and a character replete with every manly excellence, was deservedly beloved of all; but then his pursuits were commercial, and at this time (a fact that said volumes for his prudence, integrity, and the high regard in which he was held by the firm—for he was a very young

man) he was but the collecting-clerk of a manufactory; while Mary Lawson, brought up in a garrison depot, accustomed to the gay society and glitter of military life, could see no gallant attributes in a lover unconnected with it, and discarded her worthy, high-minded cousin, for the sake of a senseless, selfish being, who, in consideration of the very good dinners her father occasionally gave, and the pleasure of a nice girl's society in country quarters, affected to address her, and actually trifled with her affections, till, her father's death making his circumstances known, her military lover hastily broke off the affair, coldly regretting to a mutual acquaintance, that "his fortune would not admit of his marrying any woman who could not find her own *kit*." Now it was that Mary Lawson discovered the difference in the relative characters of her two lovers, and at the same time the fact, that, however we may be flattered into a preference of showy charms, wanting some real basis for affection, the flame we suffer from is superficial, as the object, a mere phosphorescent glare, that wounds no deeper than our self-love, and brings with it its antidote in the disgust and contempt with which it fills us. Her sole regret (a deep and lasting one) was for the weakness of her own judgment, or rather choice (for judgment had, alas! nothing to do with it), and a sense of remorse for the true heart she had turned from her in her senseless vanity. At this moment, as she read over his letters fraught with intelligence and observation, full of racy,

healthful feeling and expression, scorning, in his deep love of truth, to flatter even her, she felt, as she had done a thousand times, since her own conduct had lost him to her, his immense superiority, and her own unworthiness of him. For some time she had not heard from him; report said he had become a principal in the firm he formerly served; and in her poverty and sorrow pride had put a veto on her communicating with him; and, believing that growing ambition would blot out whatever remnant of affection her own injustice had not crushed, it was only thus in secrecy and silence that she refreshed her woman's heart with the sweet consciousness that once at least she had been truly loved, and by one whom, in her chastened and matured judgment, it appeared a most intense triumph to have been loved by. Someway this present, though strictly anonymous, associated itself in her mind with him, and renewed, she knew not wherefore, all the thoughts she had contended unavailingly to put away. But to be brief, their Christmas, if not a merry one, proved at least free from the want that had preluded it; and the New Year, like a new monarch, who cancels the judgments of his predecessor, from its very dawn, brought with it fresh hopes and brighter prospects to them. Unseen and unsuspected, Frank Townsend had made himself master of their circumstances—had learned the story of their perseverance, poverty, and patience; and with the faith not only of affection but of experience (believing that his cousin's heart

must be perfectly weeded of those frivolities that youth and vanity so often leave us to regret in after life), through the agency of sweet Mrs. Allworth had sounded it, and waited but a fitting opportunity to prove to her the unchangingness of his own. This was not (thanks to the ardour of their mutual friends) long in arriving. The Lawsons were spending the anniversary of the New Year at the hospitable miller's, who between dinner and tea amused himself by looking into his barn, farm-yard, &c., while Mrs. Allworthy, contrary to her usual custom of taking an afternoon's siesta, slipped on her cloak, clogs, and bonnet, and wrapping up the late invalid, Kate, in no end of shawls and furs, very anxiously requested Mary to finish a difficult bit of work she had in hand, and most unceremoniously slipped off. Hardly, however, had they gone, when a gig drove up to the door, and as Mary glanced from her work to the window, a mist seemed to gather on her sight, the work fell from her hands, and just as she was rushing from the room to escape the desired, yet dreaded, meeting, Frank Townsend met her at the door, and with something more than cousinly tenderness, led her back again. What passed between them is not for us to divulge. It is sufficient to say that, during the rest of the evening, Mary made no farther attempt to run away; and that, instead (as John Thorndyke had settled, and Mrs. Toms believed) of their goods coming to the hammer in default of his

rent, he duly received his money. Miss Lawson and her sister left Elmstead, as bride and bridesmaid ; and thus our Village Library remains a reminiscence to this day.



ON THE SPIRIT OF YOUTH IN THE YOUNG AND THE OLD.



THE child is rich in hope, and longs to be a man; the man has his treasures in memory, and wishes that he had always been a child. We are all pleased to look back upon ourselves as schoolboys, and recal, with a mournful tenderness, those thoughtless, happy days when we had masters to instruct us that we were born to suffer and to die, but when the feeling was, that we had life within us, whose principle was enjoyment, and whose duration without end. Whether our school-days are the happiest of our lives is a contested question, but there can be no doubt, I think, as to those of them passed out of school. I have no great favour, I confess, for masters, and cannot conscientiously defend the agreeableness of lessons, or

the pleasing propriety of being flogged for not attending to them ; but the playground, and the holidays—no, there is nothing like them afterwards. In estimating the happiness of a schoolboy, people are apt to think more of the school than the boy. He is not happy in consequence of being at school, but in spite of it. I may incur some disgrace with elderly gentlemen, but I shall have all the boys on my side, I believe, when I admit, absolutely, that school is but a dreary place ; it is not worse, however, than the after-schools in which men must learn to toil and suffer, while the boys have an advantage all their own, in the unconquerable sportiveness of their age. On this ground I am clearly disposed to conclude that school-days are the happiest of our lives.

How beautiful is that law of playfulness which governs the youth of all created animals ! How glorious that short-lived era of the blood when school-boys, and puppies, and kittens, caper and dance by a sort of instinct or necessity ! This irresistible gaiety is not the result of superior health and strength, it is the exulting spirit of mere life in the newly-born ; an elementary joyousness which requires no aid from without, which is not excited in them, but is a part of them. The child, in proof of its being, might say, in the spirit of the philosopher, I rejoice, therefore, I am. We, whom years and knowledge have invested with the prerogative of being serious, smile at the ecstasies of youthful levity with a sympathy moderated by contempt.

Poor, foolish creature, how happy it allows itself to be! Pleasant enough, we exclaim; but, ah! if it knew what was to come! We shake our prophetic heads when we see the lambs frisking about us and think of mutton.

This triumphant sense of life has different degrees of duration, according to varieties in moral and constitutional temperament: it may give way before its natural period to the shocks of accident; sometimes it is prolonged almost to that term which we call our years of discretion, and sometimes it bursts out in brief transports through the gloom and cares of perfect reason and melancholy maturity. Once in a way, in a spring morning, perhaps, a gentleman of sober habits feels himself, on the first taste of the air, very unaccountably disposed. If he be in the country, he falls incontinently to rolling in the grass, or takes to kicking his heels, or tries a short run with a jump at the end of it, with other caprices of motion which have nothing at all to do with getting on, or for which, very likely, he heartily despises himself. He is soon relieved. His habitual feelings and numberless little circumstances of his daily experiences are at hand to quell his romping vivacity at a moment's notice. He feels a twinge of the rheumatism, or recollects a bad bargain, and we see no more of his jumps.

For my part, whenever a fit of this sort of coltishness comes upon me I not only indulge in it without remorse, but encourage it by all the means in my

power. Oh! for the secret of commanding such a spirit at all times; the noble art of going through life with a hop and a skip! How grievous it is that we cannot always be boys; that we cannot grow from three feet to six without an absolute change of nature! Lady Mary Wortley observes, with her usual liveliness, "It is a maxim with me to be young as long as one can. There is nothing that can pay one for that valuable ignorance which is the companion of youth, those sanguine, groundless hopes, and that lively vanity which makes up all the happiness of life. To my extreme mortification, I find myself growing wiser and wiser every day." " 'Tis folly to be wise" is not a mere conceit, but we can't help it. The most limited experience of life is sufficient to expel the charming illusions of ignorance. Every day, from the hour of our birth, takes from us some happy error never to return. The fugitive enchantments of our swaddling-clothes are superseded by the frail wonders of short-coats; these again we are soon taught to despise; and so, as we live, we are reasoned or ridiculed out of all our jocund mistakes till the full-grown man sees things as they are, and is just wise enough to be miserable. Ah! a Jack-a-Lantern! At this hour of my sad maturity I remember the throb of heart with which I used to welcome this metaphysical stranger; how I chuckled and crowed as my dazzled eye followed him through the changeful figures of his fantastical harlequinade! What it was, or how it came, it never

occurred to me to inquire; it was regarded simply as one of the delicious accidents of life sent on purpose to puzzle and to please. Soon, however, a tender instructor broke in upon my senseless delight and explained to me the cause of the phenomenon. From that moment the sprightly meteor danced and gambolled unheeded over my head. Who remembers without regret the extinction of his thrilling belief on the subject of that grim couple in Guildhall, Gog and Magog? "And do they really come down?" Why ride in a coach when one is no longer convinced that the houses are running away after one another on each side of us? Who cares for Punch when he is nearly certain that he is not alive? and what do we go to a play for, after the time when we turned to mamma to beg her not to let the man stab the lady? And then the man in the moon—not to mention the precision with which you absolutely made out his face. Can we forget that such things were, and can we forgive ourselves that they cease to be?

But, if we regret the changes which time and knowledge produce in the sights and sounds of the physical world as they affect our young fancies, how much more may we grieve for those which they establish in our moral attributes, our passions, affections, loves, and aversions? What a cost of honest nature goes to make up a gentleman! Talk of teaching dogs to dance—what is it compared with the barbarity necessary to make a man, in the common sense of the term, polite? There is a politeness

the gift of nature, but it has many awkwardness and simplicities of feeling, gesture, and carriage which must be removed or refined before it will pass current in the commerce of genteel life. See the poor biped turning out his toes in the stocks see him under the slow torture of elaborating a bow, and then trace him through all the heartaches of his moral drilling, that system of disguising, cramping, twisting, and pinching, by which, inside and out, body and soul—Lord help us! what have we done to deserve all this?

The schoolboy looks forward with rapture to the time when, says he, "I shall be my own master." Idle anticipation! His first essay, perhaps, as a free agent, is in the critical business of love; his young heart burning for the realities of that tender passion which he had doated on in the creation of poetry and romance. He is informed, however, that he must not love Miss Brown, for whom he is really dying, because she is only beautiful and amiable; he must learn, nevertheless, he is told, to love the ugly Miss Jones, because she is rich, with the same sort of respect for his natural predilections as were shown when he was formerly taught to swallow rhubarb without making faces like a man. He has a sincere friendship for an old crony of his school-days, because he admires his talents and honours his principles; but he must learn to give him up, or see him at the risk of being disinherited, because he is wickedly of a family opposite to his father in po-

litical interests and opinions. He has a just indignation against a certain patriot who sold his conscience for a place, but he must learn to treat him with respect, because who knows what may happen? He is disposed to be on very easy terms with an agreeable foreigner who falls in his way, but he must learn to be shy and distant, because nobody knows him; while he must go premeditatedly to dine with Mr. Crump, notorious only for his dullness, because, in fact, he lives at the next door but one and is an old acquaintance. He plays at whist, which he abhors, lest Mr. Screw should be out of humour; drinks wine, which always makes him ill, because he is asked; goes to bed when he is not sleepy, because it is eleven o'clock; and gets up, when dying for more sleep, because it is time to rise; sits shivering with cold, because it is June; faints for want of food, because dinner is not ready; or eats without hunger because it is ready; sees visitors who only annoy him, because they call and then annoys himself and them, because he must return their visit; goes out when he would rather be within, because his horse is at the door; and stays at home when he is longing to be abroad, because it is only noon, and nobody goes out till two. And this is being his own master.

No pity for simple nature, straightforward will, and comfortable ignorance. Learn! learn! is the cry, till we give up all we love and bear all we hate. While yet untaught and unpractised, how eager are

we to trust all that smile upon us; to give all we can to all that want; to love and to hate as the heart directs; to speak what we think, and all we think; to despise all that is despicable; to cherish those that have served us; to love our country for its own sake; and to love religion for God's sake! But, alas! what sad havoc do instruction and fashion make with these native impulses and fresh desires! Confidence must learn to look about her; charity, to listen to reason and to self; love, how to keep a house over its head; hate, not to make faces; sincerity, to hold its tongue; scorn, to be polite; gratitude, to forget; patriotism, to get a place; and religion, to be a bishop.

"Men are but children of a larger growth*" might be a high compliment to human nature, but unfortunately, it is not true. If old age could be regarded only as a condition of ripe infancy, it would be full of attraction and endearment; but, stamped with the impress of the world, with all its tricks, its shuffling wisdom and callous experience, it no more resembles the open soul of childhood than a sallow and wrinkled skin resembles the smoothness, and softness, and bloom of its smiling face. Once in a century, indeed, one meets a man who may seem to make out the vision of the poet—one who has borne the shock of conflicting interests and passions untaught, or at least unchanged; who has pushed hi

* Dryden.

way through the crowd of this villanous world, and yet, in every respect of moral simplicity, still wears his bib and tucker and eats with a spoon. Such a person makes but a bad figure "on 'Change," and would be out of all decent costume at court. He is much too young for the law, and not quite old enough for the church. It is not impossible that you might find him among the curates, but never think of looking for him in a wig. I have known one individual of this description, and only one, a joyous baby of three-score, with whom I once went a bird-nesting in company with his grandchildren. It was in a spring morning early, when the dew still sparkled on the grass, and all nature was an image of youth and freshness. The grey head of my companion might be considered a little out of season, but his cheerful eye, his lively talk, and ready laugh, were in perfect keeping with the general scene. Time had set his mark upon him; but, like an old thorn, he blossomed to the last. Age had stiffened his joints and hardened his sinews, but his affections were still full of spring and flexibility. He could not exactly play at leapfrog, but he could stand and look on with wonderful agility. I would not have these considered as the happiest instances of his childishness. The simpleton, after sixty winters, was still warm-hearted and disinterested; had still faith in the natural kindness of man, and an immoveable conviction that to do good was to be happy, and to be happy the end of his living. He was not ignorant of the use and

power of money; but, somehow or other, it was seldom connected in his mind with any more dignified associations than bulls'-eyes and sugar-balls and he never could be brought to admit, by any force of calculation, that it was a component part of love and friendship. He had many other peculiarities, which he cherished with a reference to his own feelings, rather than the opinions of the world. He had a shocking habit of laughing at grave faces, and at all sorts of gravities not founded in sincerity. He could look sad, and be sad, at a tale of distress, and had a laugh always ripe for a joke, or even the intention of one; but the artifices of affectation, mere physiognomical solemnity, or a smile discovering more teeth than pleasantry, excited in him no kind of emotion. His sister, who, in relation to him, was altogether of the antipodes, was perpetually oppressing him with the remark, "Brother, you ought to know better." But, poor man, he never improved—like all children, he was very impatient of leading-strings, and would be running alone though he got many a bump on the head for his pains. He died, I grieve to say, a martyr to a game at ninepins.

Such characters, according to my observation, are among the rarest in the motley crowd of mankind. An "old buck," and an "old boy," are common phrases; but they apply rather to a system of blood and juices than to any moral distinctions. A *fine "old boy"* is one somewhat shrunk, perhaps in the legs, and a little protuberant in the belly, but active

withal, who wears buckskins, is carnivorous, no flincher from the bottle, and can walk up stairs without touching the banisters. I by no means wish to undervalue the merits of such a man. It is said of him, "That he wears surprisingly well," as one says of a pair of boots; and that, let me tell you, is something. The "*old boy*," however, whom I desiderate is quite of another description; he would answer better, perhaps, to the world's denomination of an *old fool*, one whom a knave might cheat, or a hypocrite overreach, somewhat more easily than they could practise on other people; and with whom they might have gained all their ends, fairly and openly, by trusting to that benevolence which was as little able to deny as to suspect. The Vicar of Wakefield, when he suffered himself in his wisdom to be cheated out of his horse by the cosmogony-man, was certainly an old fool. His son Moses had the excuse of youth, and the fatalism of his thunder-and-lightning great-coat; but the great monogamist, what shall we say for him? This same vicar, indeed, is a delicious example in all respects of the kind of old boy so much the object of my love and respect; and, as I have mentioned him, I will leave the associations inseparable from his name to perfect and embellish for me the character that I have been aiming to illustrate.

THE RATIONALE OF GHOSTS.



THE age of superstition is fast giving way to the age of science ; the occult elements of our nature are now dismissed to the shades by the great modern tyrant, Matter-of-Fact ; we shall soon come to “ lord it ” superciliously over all those subtle feelings and apprehensions which cannot be clearly accounted for by the School-master, the doctor, the chymist, the mechanist, the grave-digger, and the stone-mason. When we are dead, buried, and epitaphed, it will be sheer imperti-

nence "to walk," as of yore, frightening respectable people in bed, or at table, and disturbing them from their business. As the Genius of Philosophy advances, seated aloft on his steam chariot, attended by his stern, remorseless train of analytic reasoners and experimentalists, the appalling adumbrations of Signior Goblin or Baron Bogie retreat, appalled in their turn; while those who were unluckily gifted with "the vision and the faculty divine" (say rather with the peculiar temperament and idiosyncrasy) of beholding preternatural shapes, and hearing inorganic voices, are now almost as few in number as "the specter" among poets. The reign of supernatural terror is nearly at the last phase of its final lunation; and thousands of doughty Ghosts in sheets, in armour, or in airy robes, breathing phosphoric fire, pointing with a awful straight finger, and leaving their cards behind them in the shape of a warning scroll, together with a strong perfume of naughty-place sulphur, are now trooping back—like bad ministers turned out of office—sad, forlorn, and unpitied, to seek companionship with the preposterous Shades of ex-giants, in those by gone days when such cubit-lubbers *were*.

Before we dismiss them, however, to their eternal rest, it may not be improper—indeed we are not sure but the omission would even savour of ingratitude—to allow them a last "squeak and gibber," in the shape of some analysis of the principles on which we have been affected by their various appearances. In doing this, we shall have to demonstrate the paradox

of seeing that which does not in itself exist; or of hearing that which has no sound. Should we succeed, it is manifest that we shall do much to enhance the past respectability of Ghosts, even in bidding them their long farewell.

Travelling one cold winter in the north of England, we found ourselves, towards nightfall, entering a sombre avenue of bare trees, whose broad dark trunks, as we advanced, were gradually expanding into the general shade that was slowly overcoming all the scene. The road would have been a rich slough had the weather been anything but a hard frost; but this apparently fortunate circumstance did not much better our condition, as the frozen ridges of earth, with deep and tortuous trenches between, and ugly holes at awkward intervals, rendered it about as dangerous a horse-road as one could well imagine. It seemed made on purpose to break legs and overturn carts. We accordingly dismounted without loss of time, and began to lead our snorting friend by the bridle.

We will not detain the reader with an account of our disastrous wayfaring; of the many shifts and turnings and pauses we were compelled to make, nor of the monosyllabic ejaculations at the sundry false steps, accompanied with our renewed endeavours and desperate setting of the teeth. Having accomplished about a hundred and fifty yards in the space of somewhat more than an hour, stoppages included, we at length arrived at a tolerably level road, and discerned a light from a window glimmering in the distance.

We accordingly remounted, and, setting off at a gleeful canter, reached the overhanging wooden portal of a small inn, just as a heavy fall of snow was commencing, the flakes of which were as large as those generally used at the minor theatres, though by no means so orderly in their slant, or so regular in their sequence.

We saw our horse lodged in a tolerably good stall, though very unequal to his deserts ; and as soon as he had finished his pot of porter and his corn, we entered the house and were ushered into the parlour. It was a small room, furnished as usual, with an old-fashioned mahogany table, leather-bottomed chairs, a huge clock that might have been used by Gog or Magog as a sentry-box, sanded floor, &c. There were six or seven people in the room ; and a grave-looking-man, in a pepper-and-salt coat, kindly rose and offered his seat by the fire. Courtesy might have induced us to give a faint declination to "robbing him of his seat ;" but the fact was the cold had by this time made us insensible to the existence of our toes, finger-ends, and tip of our nose ; so that we took him at his word without more ado. The room was very warm, full of smoke and argument as we entered, and the subject was "Ghosts."

The company present was composed of a young fair-haired gentleman, attired in a fancy travelling dress, not unlike the Polish costume ; a dapper little pug-nosed man, having the air of a grocer, or something in that line ; and an elderly hard-featured gen-

tleman, with short dark hair that looked as though it had been recently cut with a saw and dressed with a rake. These three we soon discovered to be strangers, who were travelling up to London, being subpoenaed on a trial. He of the pepper-and-salt vesture turned out to be the landlord. The rest, two in number only, were small farmers or graziers living in the neighbourhood.

Addressing the fair gentleman, who seemed to have been the principal speaker, we requested that our frozen and hungry, but fast-reforming condition might not at all interrupt a discussion that appeared so interesting. By degrees the subject was renewed, and the debate soon rose to a very amusing height between the said gentleman and the dapper pug-nose; the latter being frequently seconded by horse-laughs from the graziers, and provokingly dry queries emanating from the old gentleman in the corner.

"I do maintain," exclaimed the pragmatic grocer, "and, what is more, I do insist, that the instances you have adduced in favour of Apparitions are without any sufficient proof or credible attestation; and I make bold to say that no respectable jury in the United Kingdom would listen to any such statement in evidence, for one moment!

"What!" exclaimed the young gentleman contemptuously, "would you have a ghost tried by jury?"

"Certainly; or at all events, why not, if you are determined to make us believe in him? But to

return," pursued the grocer, "to return to the other story you were about to relate when this gentleman entered. You say it is well authenticated by many individuals. Now, let us just hear this."

"There's no arguing against a vulgar prejudice," answered the fair-haired young man, rather superciliously.

"True," muttered the old gentleman in the corner.

A general request, however, being made, the advocate of essences and shades, after a few more demurs, related the following story:—

"A young lady, the daughter of a merchant whom I well knew when I was a boy—he resided a few miles from the town of L——, in Northamptonshire,—fell in love with a young artist who was making a tour through those parts. He painted her portrait and that of her father also, and very like they were. But it was not only to his abilities as an artist that he owed the young lady's affections; for he was a very interesting person in many respects, and wrote verses, some of which I have seen, that were really charming, from their unaffected beauty and the love of nature they displayed in every line. Well, his profession had led him frequently into the society of many fascinating women, among whom he was a great favourite, which had, perhaps, spoiled him a little, so that he was by no means an apt subject for falling over head and ears in love. The young lady's affection wrought imperceptibly upon his feelings, and eventually he became as

much devoted to her as she was to him. He accordingly proposed to her father to marry her, and wished the union to take place immediately. Her father strongly objected: not—to his honour be it said—on account of the young man's circumstances, for he declared that his daughter's happiness was his chief object, and he had enough wealth for both of them—but on account of her youth. He feared that her affection was only the ebullition of first feeling, and that it would not last. It was in vain the young lady insisted that her love would never know change or diminution; in vain the enamoured artist argued that first feelings were the strongest. The father only replied, they were not often the most permanent—he was wrong in *this* case—and peremptorily refused his consent. At the intercession of her mother, however, matters were so accommodated, that, if at the end of two years they were both of the same mind, the father would then freely give his consent. Meantime the youth was to withdraw himself, and they were not to correspond. To this arrangement the lovers made a strong resistance; but the old gentleman remained inflexible, and they were obliged to submit. The young artist departed, and it very nearly cost the poor girl her life. She recovered her health, however, in a few months, and lived upon hope. Her father took her about to parties and balls, and introduced a great many agreeable youths to her at his own house; but it would not do. She kept them all at such a distance that only two of them had the face to make her

an offer. To make short of the story, gentlemen, the two long years at length were worn away, and back came the artist on the very day the term expired. Now was the season of flushed cheeks and palpitating hearts, and all was enjoyment and happiness in the house. The father gave his consent, and the day was fixed for the marriage. In the meantime the youth lived with them as one of the family; walked out with his fair mistress alone; read poetry; made sketches—very bad ones, no doubt, his hand shook so; sang duets; picked fruit; in short it was a love match in the genuine sense of the word. One morning, however, when it only wanted three days to the wedding, being too restless in mind to follow any of their previous amusements, the young man, by way of novelty, and no doubt in order to be more alone with his mistress, proposed to her to go with him in a little boat for the purpose of fishing. Now, she had always had the utmost antipathy to the water, and found it impossible to overcome her dread. But he, in the unreflecting way of many men, treated it as a mere feminine weakness, which she ought to overcome, and the more she objected the more he persisted, as if it had been so ordained by fate; and finally announced that, if she were so much afraid of herself, he would go alone. This threat (in making which he showed himself to be selfish, by the very fact of accusing her of the same) had the desired effect, and she declared she would rather risk being drowned with him, than that he should go without her. Well, they went; and

he rowed the boat out into a deep part of the stream, flung over the little grappling iron to keep the boat steady, and began to watch his bobbing float. This, you know, gentlemen, is what is called 'fishing.' I'd wager my head he caught nothing; but I dare say that in the long interval between the 'bites,' they gained in golden moments of pure love far more than the amount of the fish lost, so that the time did not hang at all heavy upon their hands. Whether it was during one of these moments so rife with interest to all true lovers, and so little interesting to everybody else—except as a matter of envy—it unfortunately happened that a little bouquet of flowers fell out of the young lady's hand into the water. Her lover made a catch at it, and missed it. 'I'll have it yet,' said he, and made a second attempt, but it had floated too far. 'I *will* have it!' he exclaimed, and ran to the other end of the boat; but overreaching himself he fell in. He could not swim, and rose struggling and gasping. The young lady screamed, and, seeing him sink a second time and the water close over him, threw herself in after him. It happened that a large Newfoundland dog was passing that way—saw the accident—and, like a sensible man, jumped off the bank directly, and swam towards them.—I beg your pardon, gentlemen, I did not intend to make you smile.—The dog, of course, made for his young mistress, and, just as he arrived at the spot, her long auburn hair—all the combs out—was streaming, like sea-weed at sunset, along the water. He seized a large mouthful, and

dragged her safely to the bank. He then left her, and ran off to the house—bolted into the parlour, shaking the wet about in all directions, and barking, and jumping upon everybody. Her mother was the first to understand him, and, uttering a faint cry, rushed out of the house, but fell fainting before she had crossed the lawn. The servants, however, followed the dog, and soon reached the bank, where they found the young lady lying quite insensible. She was carried home, and brought to herself; but her unfortunate lover, when got out at last by some drag nets, was quite dead."

"Could not the dog have saved him too?" asked the grocer.

"Don't you understand that he was at the bottom of the stream?" said the landlord, and resumed his pipe consequentially.

"Allow me to proceed," said the fair-haired gentleman, "for now comes the extraordinary part of the story. The unfortunate artist was buried in the vault of the family, and the young lady lay upon her bed raving with a brain fever. I omit to mention several wonderful things that occurred during this state, because they may perhaps be naturally accounted for by the disordered excitement of her faculties. She recovered, after a long course of illness, but walked about more like one who had come back from the grave, than a real human being. One thing was particularly remarked by everybody who had seen her lover; and this was, the painful and pathetic circum-

stance of her expression of countenance being stamped with a most striking resemblance to that of her dead lover. She continued in this melancholy state, in spite of all the efforts of her friends, till the anniversary of the day on which her lover had returned. On this eventful morning, a loud scream, that seemed rather of joy than horror, was heard above stairs; when the family, all rushing up, found the poor girl extended senseless in the passage leading to her room. On coming to herself, she declared that she had met her lover; and repeated the assertion, in answer to all their subsequent questions, with a steady consistency and minuteness of detail that perfectly astonished and perplexed all who heard her. She never left her bed again; and on the very day twelve-month from that on which he was drowned, she died, calling upon his name, as though he were close at hand and struggling in the water. After her death, the expression of her face for several hours was more than ever like that of her ill-starred lover; and, moreover, the surgeon who attended the family declared it resembled that of a person who had been drowned."

A silence pervaded the room at the conclusion of this story. There was a sentiment of devoted passion in it, and a tragic pathos that overawed for the moment both the vulgar and the pertinacious, almost as much as it would those capable of entering into its subtle feelings with sympathetic imagination. Perceiving the effect it had produced, and misinterpreting the cause, by supposing it was owing to his victory

over their prejudices as to supernatural appearances, the young gentleman resolved to clench the matter by introducing an instance of his own experience in that way.

"I see, gentlemen," pursued he, "that you are struck with this anecdote, nor am I surprised at it; but I have one other story to relate, which happened to myself, that I think will set the matter entirely at rest, and convince you of the truth of these spiritual visitations. It will not detain you long, and is no less extraordinary than what I have just related."

"Ah! let us hear *this!*" exclaimed the pragmatic grocer, settling himself afresh upon his seat. "This is a case in point; I never before met with any one who had seen a ghost."

"That is very likely," retorted the other; "you are one of those incorrigible people who, if they saw a ghost with their own eyes, would swear it was a mistake—as soon as they had quite recovered themselves, and saw their friends all round them."

"So I would," said the grocer.

"I thought so. Well, gentlemen, I had a very dear friend some years since—an old schoolfellow, in fact—and we two were always together. During four years we met every evening at a house that belonged to him, a few miles out of town; and we always sat on a garden-seat, when the weather permitted, talking together and taking a glass of wine and a cigar. He was very fond of his cigar. At the end of these four years—the happiest I ever passed

in my life, for he was a most amiable man, of very interesting conversation, and had the strongest hold upon my feelings—he met with a dreadful fall from his horse, and, after lingering a few weeks, he died. From that time he was never absent from my thoughts; nor is he, even to this day. Some months after the fatal event, I chanced to be passing in the direction of the house, and I could not resist the melancholy satisfaction of going and paying a visit to the garden-seat where we had so often sat together about that time, in the evening twilight. I entered the garden with deep feelings of sorrow and awe, and these increased as I advanced, so that even the rustling of a leaf made me start. I had just arrived near the corner of a walk, facing which the seat was placed, and from which spot I had so often heard his well-known voice calling to me, when a rustling sound in the air, as if something thicker than wind was brushing past, made me start, and it set all my teeth chattering as I stood holding my breath. The next moment I heard his voice, as distinctly as I ever heard it in my life, calling my name! In the terror of the moment, and impelled by a kind of desperation I know not how to account for, I rushed to the corner of the walk; and at the other end, sure enough, there I saw the apparition of poor Johnstone—seated upright upon the garden-chair, with a mist all round him!”

“That,” interrupted the grocer, “was no doubt the smoke of his cigar!”

A roar of laughter filled the room at this most unideal and destructive joke, in which it was almost impossible to help joining. The old gentleman in the corner, however, maintained his gravity unshaken.

"I did not say," ejaculated the narrator, indignantly, "I did not say, Sir, that his ghost *was* smoking a —— You are an unfeeling fellow, Sir, and you want ideas."

"Pray, Sir," asked the old gentleman, interrupting the pause that followed this angry reply, "pray, Sir, what do you mean by a 'ghost?' Define the term, for I do not understand it."

"Why, Sir, as to defining the term, it may be called by a dozen different ones; all I know is, I *heard* the voice and I *saw* the thing."

"What thing?" asked the inflexible old hard-heart.

"Why, the apparition or ghost of my friend—his soul, or his spirit—that which enables us to 'live and move, and have our being'—the indestructible portion of our life. I take it for granted that the gentleman I am addressing does not believe in annihilation."

The old gentleman slowly laid down his pipe, as though preparing for something, and, gathering his long brown great coat round his legs, bent his head forward into the light, displaying to our eyes, for the first time, a really fine specimen of that class in physiognomy vulgarly denominated the 'hatchet-faced.'

"How is it possible," demanded he, fixing a dark

keen eye upon the young man; "how is it *possible* that any one can hear or see that principle which gives you and me the power to think and move?"

A long pause intervened. The old gentleman had made his blow, and sank back again into his corner.

"That principle," we now ventured to observe, "is the grand difficulty which has defied all the philosophers that have lived, as it probably will all those who follow. Can we suppose that such an essence may be seen and heard?"

"Very true," exclaimed the grocer, "and exactly my own opinion." "Hugh-a-ugh," laughed the graziers. "Humph!" muttered the old gentleman. The landlord continued his pipe.

"Do you mean, Sir," asked the Polish-looking narrator, "to infer that I have been hoaxing you with premeditated untruths?"

"By no means, Sir. I have no doubt that you firmly believe every word you have spoken. But you must suppose that in a subject like this few will agree with you. The rarity, however, is not in the 'ghosts,' but in that singular and subtle disposition of the sensibilities and imagination, which are requisite to constitute the *seers* of ghosts. For my own part I coincide with you in the belief of all you have said."

"Why, what the deuce is this?" ejaculated the grocer. "I thought just this minute you were exactly of my own opinion? You set out with saying so?"

The graziers stared, with open mouths, and a testy grunt was uttered by the old gentleman. The landlord held his pipe with a tenacious finger and thumb in front of his withdrawn nose, and sat pricking up his ears and looking all caution.

"It was not I who said so," we answered. "You declared that what I had remarked was exactly your own opinion. This partnership, however, I can have no objection to our dissolving."

"But you said you believed all that gentleman had said," pursued our grocer.

"Allow me to qualify it according to my notions, and I certainly do."

"Let's hear, Sir, let's hear," uttered several voices somewhat tauntingly, as we fancied. And now a difficulty struck us for the first time of a very awkward nature. We had undertaken to explain a subject which, if demonstrated with all the acumen of philosophy, or even with the truth of a ghost itself writing an autobiography, was certain not to be comprehended by the majority. We could not however retract, and commenced without hope.

"Allow me to offer a few observations on the story of the young lady whose devoted attachment terminated in so tragic a manner. The first thing, no doubt, that struck you as singular, was the resemblance her face assumed to that of her lover after his death. Be assured this is a fact which has not unfrequently occurred. The resemblance of lovers to each other, in the expression of their faces during a

long absence, has frequently been noticed by close observers of nature, and is easily accounted for by the imagination continually dwelling on the features of the object beloved, and thus eventually bringing to the surface a corporeal manifestation or expression of the subtle movements within. Intense sympathy, and sensibility, long foiled in hope, and disappointed of the possession of their object, often cause the death of an individual without any outward signs that can be identified with the cause; but the peculiarity of the individual, or an apt coincidence of certain faculties, may readily occasion the above phenomenon. The physiognomical appearance of the young lady after death is explicable in the same way. The powerful excitement which caused her death was closely connected with the whole story of her intense affection; and the awful resemblance showed the visible form and feature of that catastrophe which her imagination had identified with her own last moments. Am I intelligible thus far?"

"Go on," muttered the old gentleman.

"Pray, Sir, continue," exclaimed the young traveller.

"Not so *very* intelligible, neither," said the grocer, looking towards the graziers interrogatively. "But you say nothing about the *ghost*!—let us come to that."

"I will endeavour," we resumed, "to explain my own opinions on the subject. I must premise, however, that what I have to say has nothing to do with

the various hoaxes and chemical impositions that have been practised at various times. You may laugh; but I only mean to deal with the sincere and conscientious seers of ghosts, who are intelligent withal; and I do not by any means allude to the green-lane sprites or churchyard goblins of country people, the haunted houses of vulgar town's folk, nor to those of the romancers, with their blood-stained apparitions dragging great iron chains about ruined abbeys, or pulling the bedclothes off honest persons, with other mischievous impertinences. We hear and see,—as I never yet knew of anybody affirming that he had touched, smelt, or tasted a ghost, I shall leave these latter senses out of the immediate question,—we hear and see by means of the corresponding outward senses. They act upon the perceiving power within; and to effect this they must put certain organs into motions and positions coincident with the impulse. Whenever the memory presents objects to our mind, an operation similar *in kind* to that which first conveyed it to our perception must take place. At all events, this is my theory of the medium or mechanical part of memory. But when these secondary phenomena are preternaturally excited, as in organic disease, delirium, or the entire dominion and tyranny of the passions, the inflamed imagination may so react upon the sensibility of the external senses, as to reproduce, in a degree, the operations of certain original impulses. And thus visions, phantoms, and other delusions of the senses (differing from those ordinary and com-

monplace delusions under which, by the law of nature, they constantly act) have flitted before the eyes, corresponding in their appearance with the peculiar cause of excitement under which the individual has been labouring. According to this theory, ghosts have really been seen, and will be seen again as long as the world lasts. We say this on the assumption that there will always exist some individuals in whom the imagination and the nervous system are unhealthy."

We leave the reader to imagine the discussion that ensued. On our moving to withdraw, the fair-haired gentleman rose, and, deferentially tendering his card, said some very civil things, and wished us good night. Just as the door closed behind us, we heard him entering into a sort of reproachful remonstrance with the "grave senior;" in which we just caught the words "your hard-headed matter-of-fact men—march of intellect," and something about "a primrose on a river's brim."

RIP VAN WINKLE.

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.



HEY who have voyaged up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. At their base, in a little village, founded by some of the Dutch colonists, there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant; but he inherited little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple, good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbour and an obedient husband. If a termagant wife may be considered a blessing, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is that he was a great favourite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles, and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossiping, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them

long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity ; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long as Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences ; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to any body's business but his own ; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm ; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country ; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces ; his cow would either go

astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some outdoor work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst-conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes, of his father. He was generally seen trooping, like a colt, at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged

his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belonged to him.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as ill-used as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master going so often astray.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village, which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of his Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade of a long, lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions, that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing stranger. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dic-

tionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sundial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapour curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage, and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labour of the farm and clamour of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad; whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and, if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind, on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill mountains. He was after his favourite sport of squirrel-shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and re-echoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked around, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" At the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and, giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place; but, supposing it to be some one of the neighbourhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion,—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knee. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor; and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and, mutually relieving each other, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but, supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-storms which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had laboured on in silence; for, though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg

of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint, outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large head, broad face, and small piggish eyes: the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colours. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlour of Dominic Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

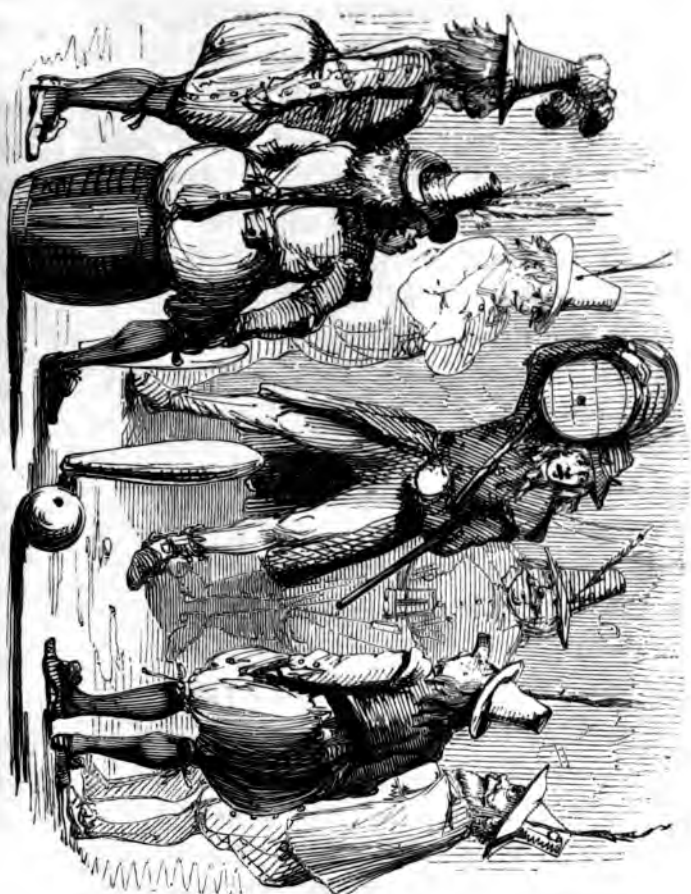
What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most

melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much the flavour of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another, and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often, that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking he found himself on the green knoll from whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft,



and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the wibegone party at nine-pins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip; "what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but, in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old fire-lock lying by him, the barrel encrusted with rust, the lock fallen off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roysters of the mountains had put a trick upon him, and having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and, if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip; "and, if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen; he found the gully up which he and his companion

had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazle, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grape-vines that twisted their coils and tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre, but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done! The morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and, whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his grey beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognised for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed. “That flagon last night,” thought he, “addled my poor head sadly.”

It was with some difficulty that he found his way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay, the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut, indeed. "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn; but it, too, was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes. All this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognised on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which

he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed to one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, "GENERAL WASHINGTON."

There was as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens, elections, members of Congress, liberty, Bunker's-hill, heroes of seventy-six, and other words, that were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and the army of women and children that had gathered at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "On which side he voted?" Rip stared in

vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, "Whether he was Federal or Democrat?" Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "What brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?" "Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders, "A Tory! a Tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbours who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well, who are they? name them."

Rip bethought himself for a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder? why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone, too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh! he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stoney-Point, others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know; he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war, Congress, Stoney-Point; he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh! Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle, yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own

identity, and whether he was himself or another **man**. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in **the** cocked-hat demanded who he was, and what was **his** name?

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end, "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's **me** yonder—no, that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on **the** mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked-hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the grey-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, his name was Rip Van Winkle;

it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and neyer has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice,

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh! she, too, had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New England pedlar."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father," cried he; "young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now! Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and, peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbour. Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbours stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked-hat, who, when the alarm was over, had re-

turned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head, upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighbourhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill mountains had always been haunted by strange beings, that it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half-moon; being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name; that his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at ninepins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live

with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm, but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favour.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can do nothing with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was revered as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor—how that there had been a revolutionary war, that the country had thrown off the yoke of Old England, and that, instead of being a subject of his Majesty George III., he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was petticoat government

Happily that was at an end ; he had got his neck ~~ou~~ of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and ~~ou~~ whenever he pleased without dreading the tyranny ~~o~~ Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was me~~n~~tioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged ~~h~~is shoulders, and cast up his eyes, which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, ~~or~~ joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed at first, at vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awaked. . It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighbourhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunderstorm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of ninepins ; and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighbourhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

THE ROMAN EMPRESS.



IN ROME there dwelt some time a mighty Emperor, named Manelay, which had wedded the King's daughter of Hungaria, a fair lady, and gracious in all her works, especially she was merciful. On a time, as the Emperor lay in his bed, he bethought him that he would go and visit the Holy Land. And, on the morrow, he called to him the Empress, his wife, and his own only brother, and thus he said, "Dear lady, I may not, nor will not, hide from you the privities of my heart ; I propose to visit the Holy Land, wherefore I ordain thee principally to be lady and governess over all my empire and all my people ; and, under thee, I ordain here my brother to be thy steward, for to provide all things may be profitable to my empire and my people."

"Then," said the Empress, "sith it will no otherwise be, but that needs thou will go to visit the city of Jerusalem, I shall be in your absence as true as any turtle that has lost her mate ; for, as I believe, ye shall not escape thence with your life."

The Emperor anon comforts her with fair words, and kissed her, and after that took his leave of her

and all others, and went toward the city of Jeru-
salem.

And, anon, after the Emperor was gone, **his** brother became so proud that he oppressed poor **men** and robbed rich men; and he did worse than this, for **he** daily stirred the Empress to commit sin with him; **but** she ever answered again as a holy and devout woman; nevertheless, this knight would not leave **with this** answer, but ever when he found her alone he made his complaint to her, and stirred her by **all** the ways that he could to sin.

When this lady saw that he would not cease for any answer, nor would not amend himself, when she saw her time, she called to her three or four of the worthiest men of the empire, and said to them thus,

"It is not unknown to you, that my lord, the Emperor, ordained me principal governor of this empire, and also he ordained his brother to be steward under me, and that he should do nothing without my counsel, but he doth all the contrary; for he oppresseth greatly poor men, and likewise robbeth the rich men; yet he would do more than this if he might have his intent; wherefore I command you, in my lord's name, that you bind him fast and cast him into prison."

Then said they soothly, "He hath done many evil deeds since our lord the Emperor went; therefore we be ready to obey your commandments, but in this matter you must answer for us to our lord the Emperor."

"Then," said she, "dread ye not, if my lord knew

what he had done as well as I, he would put him to the foulest death that could be thought." Immediately these men laid hands on him, and bound him fast with iron chains and put him in prison, where he lay long time after, till at last it fortun'd there came tidings that the Emperor was coming home, and had obtained great renown and victory. When his brother heard of his coming, he said, "Would to God my brother might not find me in prison, for if he do he will inquire the cause of my imprisonment of the Empress, and she will tell him all the truth, and so for her I shall lose my life." Then sent he a messenger unto the Empress, praying her that she would vouchsafe to come to the prison-door, that he might speak a word or two with her.

The Empress came to him and inquired what he would have. He answered and said, "Oh, lady, have mercy upon me, for, if the Emperor my brother find me in prison, then shall I die without any remedy."

Then said the Empress, "If I might know that thou wouldst be a good man, and leave thy folly, thou shouldst find grace." Then did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his trespass. When he had thus promised, the Empress delivered him anon, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily, according to his state, and then she said this to him, "Now, good brother, take thy steed, and come with me, that we may meet my lord." He answered and said, "Lady, I am ready to fulfil your commandment in all things." And then

the Empress took him with her, and many other knights, and so rode forth to meet the Emperor; and, as they rode together by the way, they saw a great hart run before them; wherefore every man, with such hounds as they had, chased him on horseback; so that with the Empress was left no creature save only the Emperor's brother, who, seeing that no man was there but they two, thus he said unto the Empress, "Lo, lady, here is beside a private forest, and long it is ago that I spake to thee of love."

Then said the Empress, "Ah, fool, what may this be? Yesterday I delivered thee out of prison upon thy promise, in hope of amendment, and now thou art returned to thy folly again; wherefore I say unto thee as I have said before." Then said he, "If thou wilt not consent unto me, I will hang thee here upon a tree in this forest, where no man shall find thee, and so shalt thou die an evil death." The Empress answered meekly, and said, "Though thou smite off my head, or put me to death with all manner of torments, thou shalt never have my consent to such a sin."

When he heard this he unclothed her all save her smock, and hanged her up by the hair upon a tree and tied her steed before her, and so rode to his fellows, and told them that a great host of men met him and took the Empress away from him, and when he told them this they made all great sorrow.

It befel that the third day after there came an earl to hunt in that forest, and, as he rode beating the

bushes, he unkennelled a fox, whom the hounds followed fast till they came near the tree where the Empress hanged. And, when the dogs smelt the savour of the Empress, they left the fox and ran towards the tree as fast as they could.

The earl seeing this wondered greatly, and, spurring his horse, followed them till he came where the Empress hanged. When the earl saw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, forasmuch as she was right fair and beautiful to behold; wherefore he said unto her in this manner-wise, "O, woman, who art thou? and of what country? and wherefore hangest thou here in this manner?"

The Empress was not yet fully dead, but, at point ready to die, answered and said, "I am a strange woman, and am come out of a far country, but how I came hither God knoweth." Then answered the earl and said, "Whose horse is this that standest by thee bound to this tree?" Then answered the lady and said, that it was hers. When the earl heard this he saw well that she was a gentlewoman; he was moved with pity, and said unto her, "O, fair lady, thou seemest of gentle blood, and, therefore, I propose to deliver thee from this mischief if thou will promise to go with me and nourish my fair young daughter, and teach her at home in my castle, for I have no child but only her, and if thou keep her well thou shalt have a good reward for thy labour." Then said she, "As far forth as I can or may, I shall fulfil your intent." And, when she had thus promised

him, he took her down off the tree and led her home to his castle, and gave her the keeping of his daughter that he loved so much, and she was cherished so well that she lay every night in the earl's chamber, and his daughter with her; and in the chamber every night there burned a lamp, which hanged between the Empress's bed and the earl's bed. This lady behaved herself so gently that she was beloved of every creature. There was at that time in the earl's house a steward which much loved this Empress, and often spake to her of his love. But she answered him again and said, "Know ye, dear friend, for a certainty, that I will never love any man in such manner-wise but only him whom I am greatly bound to love by God's commandment."

And when the steward heard this he went his way in great wrath and anger, thinking within himself, If I may, I shall be revenged on thee.

It befel upon a night, within a short time after, that the earl's chamber door was forgotten and left unshut, which the steward had anon perceived; and when they were all asleep, he went and espied by the light of the lamp where the Empress and the young maiden lay together, and with that he drew out his knife and cut the throat of the earl's daughter and put the knife into the Empress's hand, she being asleep, and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent that when the earl awaked he should think that she had cut his daughter's throat, and so would she be put to a shameful death for his mischievous deed.

And when the damsel was thus slain, and the bloody knife in the Empress's hand, the countess awaked out of her sleep, and saw by the light of the lamp the bloody knife in the Empress's hand; wherefore she was almost out of her wits, and said to the earl, "O, my lord, behold in yonder lady's hand a wonderful thing."

The earl awaked, and looked towards the Empress's bed, and saw the bloody knife, as the countess had said; wherefore he was greatly moved, and cried to her and said, "Awake, woman, out of thy sleep! what is this that I see in thy hand?" Then the Empress, through his cry, awaked out of her sleep, and in her waking the knife fell out of her hand, and with that she looked by her and found the earl's daughter dead by her side, and all the bed besprinkled with blood; wherefore with an high voice she cried and said, "Alas! wo is me, my lord's daughter is slain!"

Then cried the countess unto the earl with a piteous voice and said, "O, my lord, let this devilish woman be put to the foulest death that can be thought, which thus hath slain our only child."

Then, when the countess had said thus to the earl, he said to the Empress in this wise, "The high God knoweth that thou, mischievous woman, hath slain my daughter with thine own hands, for I saw the bloody knife in thy hand, and, therefore, thou shall die a foul death." Then said the earl in this wise, "O, thou woman, were it not I dread God

greatly, I should cleave thy body with my sword in two parts, for I delivered thee from hanging, and now thou hast slain my daughter; nevertheless, for me thou shalt have no harm; therefore go thy way out of this city without any delay, for if I find thee here after this day thou shalt die a most cruel death."

Then rose this woful Empress, and put on her clothes, and after leaped on her palfrey and rode towards the east alone without any safe conduct; and as she rode thus, mourning by the way, she espied on the left side of the way a pair of gallows, and seven officers leading a man to be hanged; wherefore she was moved with great pity, and smote her horse with her stick, and rode to them, praying that she might redeem that misdoer if he might be saved from death by any means.

Then said they, "Lady, it pleaseth us well that you redeem him." Anon the Empress accorded with them and paid his ransom, and he was delivered.

Then said she to him, "Now, my good friend, be true unto me till thou die, sith I have delivered thee from death."

"On my soul," quoth he, "I promise you ever to be true." And when he had thus said, he followed the lady still, till they came nigh a city, and then said the Empress to him: "Good friend," quoth she, "go forth thy way afore me into the city, and see thou take up for us an honest lodging, for there I propose to rest awhile." Her man went forth as she

commanded, and took up for her a good lodging, and an honest one, where she abode a long time. When the men of the city perceived her beauty, they wondered greatly; wherefore many of them craved of her unlawful love; but all was in vain, for they might not speed in anywise.

It fortuned after upon a day, that there came a ship full of merchandise, and arrived in the haven of that city. When the lady heard this, she said unto her servant, "Go to the ship, and see if there be any cloth for my use."

Her servant went forth to the ship, whereas he found many very fine cloths: wherefore he prayed the master of the ship that he would come to the city and speak to his lady. The master granted him, and so the servant came home to his lady before, and warned her of the coming of the master of the ship. Soon after the master of the ship came, and saluted her courteously, and the lady received him according to his degree, praying him that she might have for her money such cloth as might be profitable for her wearing. Then he granted that she would have anything that liked her, and soon they were agreed; wherefore the servant went immediately again with the master of the ship for the cloth. And when they were both within on ship-board, the master said to the lady's servant, "My dear friend, to thee I would open my mind, if I might trust to thee, and if thou help me thou shalt have of me a great reward."

Then answered he and said: "I shall be sworn to thee to keep thy counsel, and fulfil thine intent as far forth as I can."

Then said the master of the ship, "I love thy lady more than I can tell thee, for her beauty and feature is so excellent that I would give for the love of her all the gold that I have; and if I may obtain the love of her through thy help, I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt desire of me."

Then said the lady's servant, "Tell me by what means I may best help thee." Then said the master of the ship, "Go home to thy lady again, and tell her that I will not deliver to thee the cloth except she come herself; and do thou but bring her to my ship, and if the wind be good and fit, then I purpose to lead her away." "Thy counsel is good," quoth the lady's servant, "therefore give me some reward, and I shall fulfil thy desire."

Now, when he had received his reward, he went again to the lady, and told her, that by no means the master of the ship would deliver him the cloth, except she came to him herself.

The lady believed her servant, and went to the ship. Now, when she was within the ship-board, her servant abode without.

When the master saw that she was within the ship, and the wind was good, he drew up the sail and sailed forth.

When the lady perceived this, thus she said to the master: "O master, what treason is this thou

hast done to me?" The master answered and said, "Certainly it is so, that I needs must espouse thee." "O good sir," quoth she, "I have made a vow, that I shall never do such a thing." "Soothly," quoth he, "if you will not grant me, with your good will, I will cast you out into the midst of the sea, and there shall ye die an evil death." "If it be so," quoth she, "that I must needs consent, or else die, first, I pray thee, to prepare a private place in the end of the ship, whereas I may fulfil thine intent ere I die, and also that I may say my prayers unto the Father of heaven, that he may have mercy on me."

The master believed her, wherefore he did ordain her a cabin in the end of the ship, wherein she kneeled down on both her knees, and made her prayers, saying on this wise, "O thou, my Lord God, thou hast kept me from my youth in cleanness, keep me now, so that I may ever serve thee with a clean heart and mind, and let not this wicked man prevail with me, nor any other the like wickedness come near me." When she had ended her prayers, there arose and suddenly a great tempest in the sea, so that the ship all brast, and all that were therein perished, save the lady; and she caught a cable and saved herself, and the master caught a board of the ship and saved himself, likewise; nevertheless she knew not of him, nor he of her, for they were driven to divers coasts. The lady landed in her own empire near a rich city, wherein she was honourably received,

and she lived so holy a life, that God gave her grace and power to heal sick folk of all manner of diseases wherefore there came much people to her, both crooked, blind, and lame, and every man through the grace of God and her own endeavour, was healed wherefore her name was known through divers regions. Nevertheless, she was not known as Empress. At the same time the Emperor's brother that had hanged her before by the hair, was smitten with a foul leprosy. The knight that slew the earl's daughter, and put the bloody knife in her hand, was blind, deaf, and had the palsy. The thief that betrayed her to the master of the ship was lame and full of the cramp, and the master of the ship was brought of his wits.

When the Emperor heard that so holy a woman was in the city, he called his brother, and said to him thus, "Go we, dear brother, unto this holy woman that is dwelling in this city, that she may heal thee of thy leprosy." "Would to God, O noble brother," quoth he, "that I were healed." Anon the Emperor with his brother, went toward the city. Then when the citizens heard of his coming, they received him honourably with procession, and all provision befitting his estate. And then the Emperor inquired of the citizens, if any such holy woman were among them that could heal sick folk of their diseases. The citizens answered and said that such an one there was. Now, at the same time, was come to the same city the knight that slew the earl's daughter, and

thief which she saved from the gallows, and the master of the ship, to be healed of their diseases.

Then was the Empress called forth before the Emperor, but she muffled her face as well as she could, that the Emperor her husband should not know her, and when she had so done, she saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his estate; and, again, he in like manner, saying thus: "O good lady, if thou list of thy kindness to heal my brother of his leprosy, ask of me what you will, and I shall grant it thee for thy reward."

When the Empress heard this, she looked about her and saw there the Emperor's brother a foul leper; she saw there, also, the knight that slew the earl's daughter, blind and deaf; the thief that she saved from the gallows, lame; and also the master of the ship distraught of his wits; and all were come to her to be healed of their maladies, and knew her not; but though they knew her not, she knew them well. Then said she unto the Emperor thus: "My reverend lord, though you give me all your empire, I cannot heal your brother, nor none of these, except they acknowledge openly what great evil they have done."

When the Emperor heard this he turned him towards his brother and said unto him, "Brother, acknowledge openly thy sin before all these men, that thou mayest be healed of all thy sickness." Then anon he began to tell how he had led his life, but he told not how he had hanged the Empress in the forest by the hair of the head most spitefully.

When he had acknowledged all that him list, the Empress replied, and said, "Soothly, my lord, I would gladly lay unto him my medicine, but I wot right well it is in vain, for he hath not made a full confession."

The Emperor hearing this, he turned towards his brother, and said in this wise, "What evil, sorrow, or other unhappy wretchedness, is in thee? Seest thou not how that thou art a foul leper? therefore acknowledge thy sin truly, that thou mayst be whole, or else avoid my company for evermore."

"Ah, my lord," quoth he, "I may not tell my life openly, except I be sure of thy grace." "What hast thou trespassed against me?" said the Emperor. Then answered his brother, and said, "Mine offence against thee is grievous, and, therefore, I heartily ask thee forgiveness." The Emperor thought not on the Empress, for as much as he supposed she had been dead many years before; therefore he commanded his brother to tell forth wherein he had offended him, and he should be forgiven.

When the Emperor had thus forgiven his brother, he began to tell openly how he had desired the Empress to commit adultery with him, and because she denied, he had hanged her by the hair in the forest on such a day.

When the Emperor heard this he was almost beside himself, and in his rage he said thus, "O thou wretched creature, the vengeance of God is fallen upon thee, and were it not that I have pardoned

thee, thou shouldst die the most shameful death that could be thought."

Then said the knight that slew the earl's daughter, "I wot not," quoth he, "what lady you mean; but I wot that my lord found on a time such a lady hanging in the forest, and brought her home to his castle, and he took her and gave her his daughter to keep, and I provoked her as much as I could to sin with me; wherefore I slew the earl's daughter that lay with her, and when I had done so, I put the bloody knife in the lady's hand, that the earl should think she had slain his daughter with her own hand, and then she was exiled thence, but where she became I wot not."

Then said the thief, "I wot not of what lady you mean; but well I wot, that seven officers were leading me to the gallows, and such a lady came riding by and bought me of them, and then went I with her, and betrayed her unto the master of the ship."

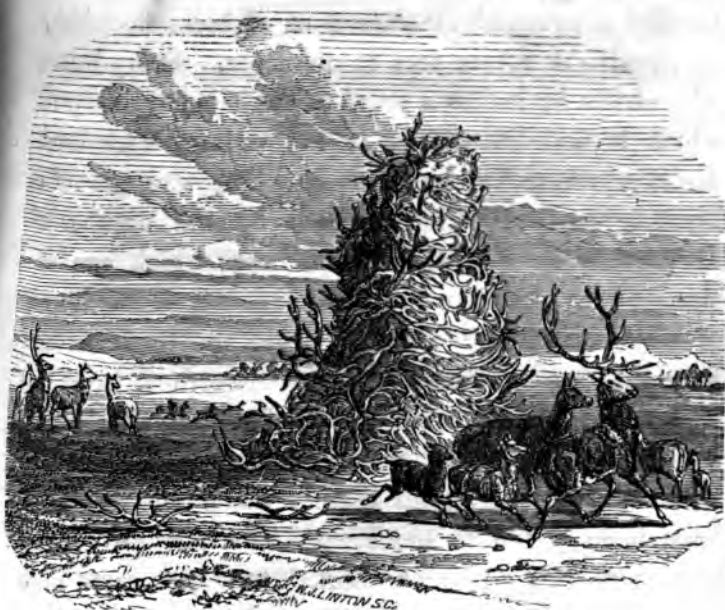
"Such a lady," quoth the master of the ship, "received I; and when we were in the midst of the sea, I would have lain with her, but she kneeled down to her prayers, and anon there arose such a tempest, that the ship all to brast, and all therein was drowned, save she and I, but afterwards what befel of her I wot not."

Then cried the Empress with a loud voice, and said, "Soothly, dear friends, ye do now truly confess and declare the truth, wherefore I will now apply my medicine," and anon they received their healths.

When the lady the Empress had thus done, uncovered her face to the Emperor, and he forthwith knew her, and ran to her, and embraced her in arms, and kissed her oftentimes, and for joy he wept bitterly, saying, "Blessed be God, now I have found that I desired." And when he had thus said he brought her home to the palace with great joy; and afterwards when it pleased Almighty God, they ended both their lives in peace and rest.



ELK-HORN PYRAMID.



THE Elk-Horn Pyramid, on the Upper Missouri, is quite a curiosity. At the "Two Thousand Miles River," so named by Lewis and Clark, which joins the Missouri, on the north side, two thousand miles above the junction of the Missouri with the Mississippi, is an extensive prairie, covered with bushes of artemisia, filled with elk and deer paths in all directions. The prairie extends without interruption as far as the eye can reach, and is called *Prairie à la Corne de Cerf*, because the wandering Indians have here erected a pyramid of elks' horns.

About eight hundred paces from the river, the hunting or war parties of the Indians have gradually piled up a quantity of elks' horns, till they have formed a pyramid of sixteen or eighteen feet high, and twelve or fifteen feet in diameter. Every Indian who passes by makes a point of contributing his part, which is not difficult, as in the vicinity such horns are everywhere scattered about. The strength of a hunting party is often marked by the number of horns they have added to the heap, which are designated by peculiar red strokes. All these horns, of which there are certainly from twelve to fifteen hundred, are confusedly mixed together, and so wedged in, that a recent party found it difficult to separate a large one, with fourteen antlers, which they brought away with them. Some buffalo horns have been added to the heap. The purpose of this practice is said to be "a charm," to secure good luck in hunting.

THE WIDOW OF THE POND FARM.

BY MRS. WHITE.



ABOUT half a mile from the village of Avely, in an angle of one of those picturesque green lanes that intersect so charmingly the rural districts of England, stands a lonely antiquated cottage—one of those lowly abodes to which all the poetry of white walls and vine boughs exteriorly belongs, but within which, unhappily, scanty food and furniture are too often the cheerless accompaniments. The Pond Farm, as it is called, why (except for the piece of water by which it stands) wiser people than I am must determine, has originally been a two-roomed tenement;

but at some later date an attic has been projected through the penthouse roof, giving an exceedingly grotesque appearance to the little dwelling, whose low walls, deep caves, and projecting frame-work are half-hidden in a vine, the planting of which no one in the neighbourhood remembers, and whose knotted and interlaced branches wreath the old structure on every side, and in its summer garniture of leaves and fruitage adds not a little to the picturesqueness of its appearance; the one tall chimney climbs its way outside, and the tiles of the sharp roof are varicoloured with moss and lichen, and patches of the dark green houseleek.

But when I first remembered the place it was not alone its age and quaintness that attracted you there was a degree of artless ornament about it, the unmistakeable sign of sufficiency and content, that made a peep at it worth a mile's walk any day. The caged linnet at the open lattice, the beehives under the southern gable—with their ceaseless hymn of jubilee six months in the year, looked pleasant even to a passer-by; and the tiny garden crammed even to disarray with flowers perpetually in blossom not only in their ordinary season, but before and after every one else's, was at once the envy and admiration of many an amateur Mrs. Loudon, whose single tulip-bed would have taken in the whole plot.

Hardly had you entered the lane, and while yet the presence of this "peasant's nest" was hidden by the old pollards and wych elms that shelter it, than

every breath that filtered through the leaves sighed of "its whereabouts;" and the incense of the honeysuckle and syringa, mignonette and clove-carnation, threw themselves upon you, inundating one's olfactory senses with a gush of wind-extracted odour. The bees, and as many of the flowers as could be spared from them, were Hetty Bourne's perquisites—the peasant woman's pin-money; her honey and nose-gays took the homely form of frocks and pin-befores, strong shoes and coarse bonnets, for some half-dozen boys and girls in progressive stages from babyhood to fourteen; but when the eldest boy, Thomas, had attained these years, their father died, leaving his young family utterly dependent on the exertions of their mother.

Poor Hetty Bourne! how readily she turned her willing hands to every variety of labour exchangeable in country places for the means of life—now knitting comforters and ploughman's stockings, now manufacturing straw hats, sometimes doing a little business in home-made bread, at others a day's work at a wealthy neighbour's, and in the season field-work for the farmers; there was nothing that she left untried to save her children from the pauper lot that threatened them, and keep a home over their heads; and in this toil she was well supported by the two eldest of them, who were of an age to understand their mother's difficulties.

It had been the ambition of Hetty and her husband to give their eldest boy a trade: this hope was

now of necessity laid aside; but the lad succeeded in obtaining employment as a farm-servant in the neighbourhood, and thus not only relieved her of the expense of his support, but slightly contributed to the maintenance of his brothers and sisters. Then next, a girl, took charge of the house and children in her mother's absence; and a third, though very young, could scare crows and help to glean very effectively.

But alas! such hands are weak barriers against want, and though her neighbours one and all bore witness to the industry and perseverance of the widow and her family—as she managed to pay her way, and maintained amidst patches and poverty that cleanliness of appearance that gives decency to the meanest home and coarsest habiliments—few did more than this. The clergyman eulogised her own and children's punctuality and appearance at church; the ladies of the neighbourhood held up her management as a model to her compeers; the parish authorities lauded her exertions and independence, that had hitherto prevented her making any application to them; and the committee of the Agricultural Association voted her a prize for her clean cottage, choice carnations, and well-kept garden.

But alas! though praise is a pleasant thing enough, striving poverty requires more solid encouragement—some more current coin than even the silver medal of an agrarian society—to enable it to persevere in well-doing. Hitherto (for the widow

and her children had strong hearts and ready hands for whatever labour offered) they had managed to support themselves above absolute want; but it was close work—a sort of touch-and-go navigation over the quicksands of necessity—but cheerfulness and a hopeful spirit carried Hetty Bourne through it all, and with untiring resolution she struggled inch by inch against its perceptible encroachments.

The winter of '40 had arrived: the season had set in with unusual rigour; the ground was frozen to a depth that forbad every operation of the husbandman; birds fell dead from the branches; masses of ice floated in the current of the Thames, and clogged its margins; the snow covered the face of the country, in many places several feet in depth; and in the agricultural districts the greatest distress prevailed; numbers of farm-servants (all those, in fact, who were not hired by the year) were thrown out of employment, and left to choose between the alternatives of starvation at home, or a pauper existence in the Union.

Amongst the rest Tom Bourne was discharged from his employment, and with an aching heart returned to add the weight of his necessities to those that he knew were already so heavily felt at home; but though poverty was there it had not yet chilled the affections or blunted the sympathies of the humble household—his welcome was as warm as if he had dropped in on a summer's holiday; and the frugal meals were shared with such an assumption

of "enough and to spare," that the recipient was cheated into the belief that it was so. He little knew that a secret competition existed between his mother and the younger children as to who should have the least appetite, or how much of self-denial was practised amongst them that he might not perceive the tax his support was to their scanty means. But, as the season deepened, their difficulties increased: not only out-of-door work, but every other species of labour seemed at a stand-still; farmers' wives were unanimous in having no more large washes till the frost broke up; others, that all extra house-work should be let alone till the snow was gone; while the widow's humble neighbours, amongst whom she had hitherto found a mart for her simple merchandise, had no longer money to purchase even the necessaries of life.

Meanwhile, in proportion to the difficulty of obtaining them, the prices of provisions and fuel increased, till coals had reached a figure unapproachable to the poor, and, with barns and bonding-houses overflowing with corn, the loaf rose as the thermometer descended, till houseless men starved in heaped-up granaries, where they had crept to shelter themselves from elements less merciless than their fellow-men. The farmers held back from opening the pits of potatoes till scarcely the means of life was left to the unfriended labourer.

The situation of the widow and her family was daily becoming more hopeless. Tom had wandered

from farm to farm, from village to village, in the hope of obtaining chance-work, but in vain ; nothing offered, and he was therefore obliged unwillingly to remain a burden on the accidental resources of his mother. Possessing health, energy, and a love of independence, this was a severe trial to the lad, more especially as, hide it how she would, the poverty of his mother's circumstances soon made themselves apparent, adding a deeper sting to discontent at his compelled inactivity.

The widow's rent was now some weeks in arrears, and day by day (averse as she had ever been to debt) the Chandler's shop became the only medium of supplying the absolute wants of her family. Nothing could well be more miserable than their condition—pinched with cold, and half-famished with hunger. Yet what could the forlorn woman do ? If she applied for parish relief, she must at once forego all that she had so long toiled and struggled to maintain—the roof under which her children had been born and her husband had died ; besides the breaking up of all that decent pride that had strengthened her hands for years, and had sustained her through all her difficulties. And so they continued to bear, meekly and patiently, privations that, because uncomplained of, were unsuspected ; *they, I say*, but the young man was an exception—his naturally sanguine and active spirit fretted itself under these sharp afflictions, and a restless moodiness opposed itself to the passive endurance of the rest. At length even the base ingredients

which poverty alone can believe available for food, and starvation render appetitive, grew too dear for the widow's lessening means.

It was at this crisis, that, in consequence of the non-payment of a poor-rate in which she had been assessed, Hetty Bourne found herself summoned by the parish officers for the amount, and in default of money such of the widow's goods as had not already been disposed of, to supply the pressing necessities of her family, were summarily distrained. The sale of her miserable furniture failed to produce the amount of the tax; but at the moment when, in default of it, the magistrate determined on sending her to prison, a benevolent individual stepped forward and paid the remainder of the rate. She, however, was condemned in costs amounting to more than four times the original assessment: the only mercy shown being a certain protracted period in which to pay it. This period passed away, and at the close of it she was, in the absence of friends or money, thrown into gaol.

A few days previous to this climax of her wretchedness, the widow sat on a low stool beside the few embers that were raked together on the hearth, chafing mechanically the yellow wasted fingers of her two youngest children, who lay with their heads on her lap—pale, hunger-worn, and emaciated. The snow had penetrated through the loosened framework of the lattice window, and spread half way across the miserable apartment, in which neither chairs nor table appeared—two or three low stools, an old keg turned

on one end, and a couple of boxes raised one on the other, serving the uses of more legitimate furniture.

The two elder girls were busied repairing some old garment, and the boys were also employed—the younger cutting elder switches into skewers, and Tom making nets such as gipsies vend for culinary purposes. “Mother,” said the latter, laying down his twine and mesh, “if something is not done with them rabbits you will have no pinks in the spring. I have tracked their footprints through the snow, and since the pond has been frozen over they have made a run across it, from the copse-hedge to the garden, and everything in it will be destroyed.”

The widow made no reply. She was just then thinking of the terrible liability that hung over her, and wondering, as she gazed at the destitution around her, if those who in the name of justice had helped to make it would really insist on claiming from her, who had neither means nor money, the hopeless “twenty-one shillings costs.”

“Perhaps,” continued Tom, speaking louder, and looking hard at her, “perhaps, after all, it’s a lucky thing, their coming: we may make a dinner of some of them one of these days.”

“And be sent to prison for it,” interrupted his mother quickly.

“Oh, it can be easily managed without that, mother,” said the youth.

“No, no, Tom,” she rejoined, earnestly, “take my advice, this state of things cannot last much longer;

and, even if it does, let us bear with it, in preference to risking such misfortune,—better half a subsistence, honestly gained, than plenty at the expense of our good name.”

“Why, how you do run on,” interrupted the young man; “I did but talk of ridding the garden of the creatures that are eating up everything in it, and you take on as if I had made up my mind to turn poacher; but don’t fret yourself, I can starve as bravely as any of you; but when I see the things at our own door, nibbling at the herb-border, as if to flavour themselves beforehand, I know how easy it would be to take them: no wonder my head runs on rabbit pudding: besides, I can’t see where would be the harm of noozing them, or who I should be injuring by doing so?”

“Why, Sir Hyde, to be sure,” answered the widow.

“Oh, mother, how can these wild creatures, burrowing in every hedge, and eating off every man’s ground, belong to Sir Hyde? Why, one may as well say that the sparrows and blackbirds are his.”

“Well, at all events, it is the law,” responded the widow, firmly; “and if I thought you would break it I should never have another happy moment.”

This was the first expression of the young man’s discontent; but it was followed by many more, as every succeeding day’s distress weakened the strength of mind and body to endure. Even Hetty’s faith in the universal balance of good and evil became shaken, and she was tempted, by continued want, to think

complacently of what, under other circumstances, she had never permitted the commission of. The famished looks of her children, rather than her son's arguments, prevailed over her scruples, and the rabbits in the garden-hedge were snared.

From the setting of one wire Tom's hand grew familiar with the business. There was excitement, and occupation, and food in it—why not make money of it? And so his snares were no longer confined to the copse-hedge across the pond, or that of his mother's garden, but in the copse itself, and the furze-covers, and wood. You might see him sauntering about, stooping here and there, under pretence of picking up the broken branches and bits of faggot-sticks for firing, but in reality fixing in the rabbit-runs the skilfully hid gin, till his practices became suspected by the farmers and Sir Hyde Park's game-keeper, and a rigid watch kept upon his movements.

Meanwhile the committal of his poverty-stricken mother ensued; and this step broke up in the young man's mind all remaining sense of his obligations to society. Despair produced indifference, and indifference, recklessness; and the honest, hard-working peasant gradually became transformed into an idle, dissolute poacher.

Let it not be supposed, however, that virtuous poverty has no partisans. The news of Hetty Bourne's misfortune soon became noised about the village, and the recollection of her praiseworthy

exertions, her integrity, and humble worth, occurred to every one, making the hardship of her case more painfully apparent, and within twenty-four hours of her incarceration she was again within the walls of her miserable dwelling, and in the arms of her weeping children. But, short as had been her captivity, the iron had entered into her soul: that one day's imprisonment had robbed her of all the fruits of long years of privation and toil; all those decent prejudices which she had struggled to uphold had been rudely trampled on and crushed; she had shunned the poorhouse to be consigned, for no other crime than poverty, to the keeping of a gaoler and a felon's cell; had borne with the sharp pangs of cold and hunger uncomplainingly, rather than eat parish bread, or appear to beg by revealing it, to be indebted to voluntary charity for her escape from convict's fare.

Poor woman! she never after held up her head, but gradually lost health and energy, and, fortunately for her peace, before the conduct of her son had involved him in a transportable offence, died.

As for Tom, he soon found that one night's fortunate poaching would pay him better than a whole week's work; and when, therefore, the summer returned, and labourers were required, it soon became apparent that he was indifferent about gaining employment, and careless of retaining it.

Now, whenever a character of this description is found in a country village, the farmers immediately

conclude that he can have but one means of supporting himself, namely, by poaching, and his own wires can scarcely be more attentively watched than he is. Yet for all this Tom Bourne contrived for some time to escape detection. His daily idleness, his lounging gait, his free expenditure at the public-house, the very set of his hat, and his loose shooting-jacket, with its sacks for pockets—all proclaimed his occupation. Yet he kept neither dog nor ferrets—was never seen with a gun; but by dint of ingenuity, and natural address in the choice of time and place, he netted more partridges, stifled more pheasants, and snared more hares and rabbits than the most experienced craftsman in the neighbourhood.

However, what watchfulness failed to bring about treachery effected, and the information of an accomplice produced a collusive meeting with the game-keepers, in which, as is too often the case, the offender endeavoured to save himself by violence, but, being overpowered by numbers, was summarily convicted and sentenced to transportation.

What became of the remainder of the widow's family I know not. When in the neighbourhood, a short time since, I passed by the Pond Farm, but found it so changed from what it used to be that I could not help threading together the incidents that had induced the alteration. The old vine still spreads its mossgrown walls, and trails upon the roof; but the mosaic of flowers that at this time of year was wont to cover every portion of the tiny

garden, and the bees that used to be an emblem of the inmates' industry, and the cheerful birds' notes—all these have vanished, and in less than five years are almost forgotten.

But there is a use beyond the mere telling of a story in tracing events to their source. There are involved in this humble narrative two points of vital importance to the community: first, as regards the system of hiring farm-servants by the job or season, and turning them off when work becomes scarce, or, in the depths of a hard winter, to beg, or steal, or starve, to fire barns from malice, or turn poachers in self-defence; and, secondly, in the foul and pauper-making measure of wringing poor-rates from creatures only separated from pauperism themselves by the occupancy of some humble homestead. I am persuaded that to these mistakes in our political economy the penal settlements are indebted for many an accession, and the unions for numerous inmates. The widow and her son are no isolated instances of the working of these principles. The annals of poverty and crime might furnish many such; and in the parish to which I have alluded their mutual evils have gone far to render that portion of the community, that in olden times was considered a nation's wealth, the greatest source of poverty and discontent.

THREE WEEKS IN BONN.

I HAVE for a long time entertained the provoking opinion that if gentlemen and ladies, making a trip on the Continent for the first time, would only give us an undisguised account of the absurdities they gravely and assiduously committed, and the ridiculous circumstances in which they were often placed in consequence, it would be much better than writing "A Tour" and endeavouring to be picturesque and lively. We are not habitually a lively people, by any means, and therefore our attempts in that way are liable to read very heavily; but when an Englishman gets into a scrape, he is then full of life in a moment. It seems to awaken all his faculties, and to call forth faculties previously unsuspected—in fact, it makes quite another man of him. But otherwise, and more especially with reference to the present subject, the world has its Guide-books, and Panoramic Hand-books, and Companions, more than enough, and does not need the instructive comments and illustrations of those, who, like William Green of Grasslands, went last summer for the first time—as it will certainly be the last—a little way "up the Rhine." I never felt any wish to travel beyond Bonn. Several of the usual excursions I certainly made, such as to Godesberg, Rolandseck, the Drachenfels, Heisterbach, &c., but I always returned to Bonn at night. There was no place for me like that. I was perfectly happy; and,

without being at all aware of the fact, perfectly ridiculous, as the following brief confessions will fully display.

I landed at Ostend some time in the night—I forget the hour and the day of the month, and even the day of the week, so deficient is my note-book in those details which tourists appear to consider so very interesting to other people. I remained at some hotel in the town all night, and went away again at day-break, knowing no more of the place than if I had not been there. I never paid for my bed. I was hurried off to the Custom-house by a commissionaire, as I had told him, with a degree, I fear, of ostentatious conscientiousness, that I had several contraband articles in my luggage on which I expected there would be a duty. “Aha!” said he. If I had held my tongue, and given him my keys, I should probably have paid nothing. I had a large canister of tea, and some horseshoes (the former a rarity, if good, and the latter of very superior make; both brought out as presents); and I had a number of books which I had brought out for my own amusement during railway and steam-boat journeys, and for rainy days. The tea-canister and the horseshoes were in a separate package, and were paid for at once; but the books were distributed amidst the contents of two densely-filled portmanteaus and a large waterproof carpet bag—novels, romances, and French and German grammars, dictionaries, and dialogue-books—some five-and-thirty volumes. The wretches, notwithstanding my offer to pay for a hand-

some guess-weight, literally emptied everything out in order to collect the books, which they then carried to a pair of scales, and deliberately weighed. It was now just six o'clock in the morning, and the train I was going with started at a quarter past six, and I had to re-pack and get there. I am naturally very alert in all cases of emergency; but my present discomfiture was so unexpected and so extreme, that I remained beside the empty portmanteaus and bag in a sort of stupor, staring at my pile of things all heaped up in a jumble together, looking just like a heap of rubbish collected for a bonfire. I had to be told three times to "pack" before I came sufficiently to my senses. However, by dint of desperation and recklessness of consequences to many articles inside, I did manage to cram everything in, and was in time for the train.

My journey shall be disposed of in a few words. I took my place for Aix-la-Chapelle direct. During the first seventy or eighty miles (a hundred for aught I know) I sat between two English gentlemen, about my own age, one armed with a large blue morocco "Continental Companion," the other with the well-known red "Guide." They spoke much about the names of old painters and pictures, and fine old buildings, and dwelt at some length on a peculiar sort of cakes and cherries at Ghent. They soon found that I knew nothing of these things, and asked me where I was going. "Straight to Bonn," said I. "And this your first visit to the Continent!" exclaimed

the Blue Companion. "What are you doing?—Bruges, Antwerp, Ghent!—what places you are losing!" cried the gentleman with the red Murray-Guide. "You will surely stop a few hours to see all that is to be seen in Bruges and Ghent?" said one. "And half a day at Antwerp and Brussels?" said the other. "No," I replied, "I am going straight to Bonn." They never exchanged another word with me nor even looked at me. They got out at Malines.

Their place was supplied by a hard-featured, serious-looking old gentleman, also an Englishman, who complained bitterly of the beds in Belgium, which he said were famous for damp sheets. "So they are!" said I, too glad at last to know something that other people knew. He looked pleased. "They are," continued I, "very damp indeed, and the waiters and chambermaids are very extortionate." Having no personal experience of this latter fact, I added modestly—"I make no doubt." The old gentleman gave me a coinciding nod, and a look of great significance, as though he would have said, "We travellers understand these things;" so I told him—thinking he would be delighted to hear it—that I never paid for my bed at Ostend. His countenance changed. All the dawning urbanity and sympathy vanished, and his face became harder-marked than ever, and full of lines and wrinkles running up and down and across. Seeing this, I explained how it had happened; but he looked at me with such intentness, and a suspicious searching of the right eye, that I got confused, and

my explanation had probably an unfavourable effect. I turned the subject as adroitly as I could, and spoke of shooting and coursing in Hertfordshire; and gradually I contrived to let him know who I was, and how long my family had lived in the county. "Humph!" said he, when I had ceased speaking, "and your father has a pretty large estate in those parts, I suppose?" "Yes, pretty well." "Farms it himself, I suppose?" "Well, he does." "Ah, he is no doubt what is called a substantial man, and he wishes you to travel into Germany to learn new methods of cultivation?" I was rather confused with all this, and said, "Yes, I was going to Bonn for some purpose like that." "Ah," said he, looking more suspiciously than ever at my last remark, "you ought to have paid for your bed!" I once more explained, in rather a warm tone, that I had not intended to swindle the landlord out of the use of his damp sheets, but that I was hurried away I scarcely knew how, and, that being the case, was I to make myself perfectly miserable all the rest of my life for it? What would he (the old gentleman) have me do by way of reparation, or to show remorse—commit suicide? No, he did not wish me exactly to do that, but he thought "that a strict moral sense ought to prompt me to some course or other, better than the one I was adopting." As he said this, the train stopped at Liège, and he got out. Before I reached Aix I came to the conviction that the old gentleman had intended a very injurious insinuation by his last

remark, and I had a great mind to go back to Liège to do something or other, I did not know what, as he was nearly old enough to be my grandfather.

Many sprightly dialogues and animated conversations occurred between my fellow-travellers during the remainder of my journey from Aix to Cologne; but as it all occurred in German or in French (not either of which languages do I understand, excepting a little French when spoken very slowly, and with the same accent I had learned at the grammar-school in Hertfordshire), I am not able to give any account of it beyond the liveliness of the gesticulations. From Cologne to Bonn, also, nothing occurred except that three very handsome English girls, sisters, all of whom made sketches by the way, contrived each of them to make a sketch of me. One of these I caught sight of: it was a caricature, in which my loose mackintosh was so arranged as to look like a countryman's frock, and the background was a hay-field. These things always amuse me. I am not ashamed of being a country gentlemen.

I arrived safely at Bonn, and, happening to get into the omnibus that belonged to the *Gasthof zum Goldenen Stern*, I took up my abode there for the night. It was about nine o'clock in the evening, and there were three long tables laid ready for suppers; and, as I could not read a word of the bill of fare, I told the head waiter, who can speak enough English for the business of the house, that I wished him to give me a good German supper. This he

immediately understood, and in less than a quarter of an hour I had a sort of beef-tea soup with forced meat balls in it, and roasted reindeer with fried potatoes and stewed plums, and a dish of salmon garnished with side plates of cauliflower and beet-root, and fricasseed chicken with salad and turnips, and a plate of ham and herring (both of the latter being cold, and also raw, but cured in some fashion), and a partridge, with a couple of bottles of Rhine wine. Of course I only eat what I liked of all this. As for the two bottles of wine, which tasted very like what I should expect of some of the pale, delicately tinted bottles in our chemists' shop windows, they did nothing for me; but I found the hotel had excellent cogniac, and a glass of hot brandy and water put me all to rights. I went up into my bedroom, which overlooked the market-place, and the night being pleasantly warm, I left both the windows, which are in fact glass-doors, wide open. When I had undressed, I went to the window and leaned upon my elbows, looking at the houses—large, white, pale pink and blue, and pale grey—which environed the market-place, till gradually the lights were all extinguished, and I sank into a reverie, and from the reverie I dropped off into a delightful sleep, in which I dreamed of the happy days of boyhood, and of a large pond near Hoddesdon into which I fell over head and ears while fishing. As I looked down upon the smiling pond of other days I thought it grew dark, and then it

gradually rose and turned round, while I sank in an opposite semicircle till the pond lay flat above my head, and suddenly burst. I awoke, with a heavy shower of rain coming down upon me, and also with a strange noise in my ears. It was a loud chorus of voices from below, and through the darkness I saw a crowd of perhaps thirty or forty figures standing round the iron railing of a stone obelisk in the centre of the market-place. They sang with all their might. The chorus was in parts, though not very well managed—I have heard as good at many a Meeting-house in a lane in Hertfordshire—and there were too many who sang the bass parts, but each one with all his might. There were one or two voices among them which topped the rest, and echoed all over the town. Verse after verse was bawled in the same style. This prodigious chorus coming thus out of the stillness and darkness all round, began to excite me very much, and made me feel an irresistible impulse to join in with it; so, waiting for the return of that part of the verse where I knew I had a good Tally-ho note, I suddenly came in with the chorus at the top of my voice, very much to my own satisfaction: and, being carried a little beyond myself by what I had done, I ended with a fox-hunting flourish that made the roofs of the houses ring again. But well it might. The chorus had suddenly ceased before I finished. There was a dead silence below; and then a buzz of voices, and a moving to and fro of the dark figures.

They advanced to the front of my hotel, and then the voices became louder, and several lights were struck and held up towards my windows, and I plainly discerned a fantastic banditti in frocks, tunics, jackets, blouses, taglionis, or tight spencers, of all colours and shapes, and slouched hats with melodramatic crowns and brims, or crimson Greek caps, and nearly all with very long hair, some with horsemen's boots and hunting whips, many with moustachios, several with large beards, and all smoking thick walking-stick pipes. Presently three of the bandits stepped forward, the tallest of whom wore high jackboots; they knocked at the closed gates of the hotel, and were soon after admitted. In a few minutes I heard footsteps ascend the stairs and cross the passages, and then came a rap at my door. "Come in." It was the head waiter, who, with a pale smile on his round face, told me that the Students had sent to demand the name of the person who had so grossly insulted them. "So then," thought I, "these young gentlemen who are acting the 'Forty Thieves' are the celebrated German students." I gave my card, and the waiter retired. I ran to call him back, recollecting that the address on the card was "Grasslands, Herts," which I feared might seem rather evasive; but he had reached the court below. I now saw the three studious Ferocities leave the hotel, and the crowd presently dispersed in parties of five and six, singing as they walked away in various directions. I had half a mind to join in once more, but I did not.

The next morning three very large, square-folded notes were brought to me as I was finishing my breakfast. I opened them, and found they were in German. The head waiter was engaged elsewhere, but I made one of the other waiters understand that he must bring me somebody to translate. About a quarter of an hour afterwards, I saw a figure enter the saloon and advance towards me, whom I felt sure was a translator. He was very thin and threadbare, with a very white face, pink eyelids, and long sandy beard, and he wore a straw hat with a sugar-loaf crown and a wide brim. I placed the three notes in the hand of Guy Faux, and it suddenly struck me that if he had but had a tinder-box in the other hand, he would have been perfect. He took off his hat with a low, and not ungraceful bow, and read the notes carefully, after which he translated them to me in very intelligible English. They were three challenges, any one of which was offered to my choice. The first was for the broad sword or the sabre, with or without pad-armour; the second for the rapier, with or without masks; and the third was for the short spear on horseback. I made him read the latter once more; it referred, no doubt, to a sort of pike or boar-spear, and came from Jack Boots. I gave the translator a small silver coin or two, which he received with profound gratitude, and retired.

Now, I can box pretty well, and wrestle, and leap, and all that sort of thing, and am a fairish

shot with a double-barrel gun, and I *used* to be a first-rate, in fact a crack hand, at single stick; but none of these rural accomplishments seemed likely to be of much value in this case. I knew nothing whatever of fencing, excepting a few attitudes I had learned when a boy, of my uncle who was a captain of militia; so that the short spear on horseback appeared my only chance. I thought, moreover, that by riding straight at my man, as I would at a high bank, and using the short spear in single-stick fashion, I might be very likely to knock the Studious Bandit slap out of his saddle, before he understood in what "school" I had studied the use of the weapon. Having made up my mind so far, I sent again for Guy Faux, who duly appeared as before, and was presently furnished with writing materials. It was a stupid piece of business,—I knew that very well; yet it might have happened to any other man almost, as well as to me. Suddenly the idea struck me that I might just as well begin by stating the truth as to the offence I had committed, and then wait and see what would come next. I therefore told the translator to write in explanation "that I had not intended to insult the Students, but had only attempted to take part in their chorus; and, if I had done so improperly, it was because I neither knew the words nor the air, and had not at all times a perfect command of my voice." He took more time and space to write this than I thought necessary, but it was in a very clear, clean, and

regular small hand. I signed it, and he went away. I then walked up and down the long saloon, where, having been the last at breakfast, I was quite alone. I felt much annoyed at the absurd position in which I had placed myself. I hoped I should be able to get a good horse; much depended upon that; he must have some blood in him, and answer to the spur; and I began to practise single-stick cuts at the head and shoulders, and consider how I would use the reins and spurs, when, just as I imagined myself in full action with my adversary Arcturus, I caught sight of a side door, the upper half of which was full of faces, male and female—some staring with astonishment, others bloated and convulsed with suppressed laughter. “Oh, go to the devil!” said I half aloud; “how excessively vexatious all this is!”

Guy came back in about twenty minutes with a smile on his lanthorn jaws. “Well, fellow?” In an instant he was grave, and informed me that the note had been perfectly satisfactory to the gentlemen Students, and they sent “much compliments to the well-born Englander, of Grasslands, who was so fond of chorus.” I was truly glad this foolish affair had ended in no greater folly.

I procured the assistance of a commissionaire to act as guide, and carry the canister of green tea and the horseshoes, which latter I intended as a little “surprise,” and therefore wished to present in person. The shoes were for an old schoolfellow and sporting companion, who had brought out two

favourite horses with him, and had been a resident in Bonn for some time, where his father, who was an English clergyman of large fortune, had taken a house for two years. The tea was for the wife of a very learned German professor belonging to the University, to whom, by a roundabout process of two London cornfactors and one of the librarians of the British Museum, I had a letter of introduction.

We soon arrived at the clergyman's house. It was a huge long building, full of windows, like a hospital, and of a dirty white and sandy colour, with a long black gutter, that seemed full of dead porter or Guinness's stout, running all down the front of it just under the windows, as is usual with most gentlemen's houses in the town. I found, to my extreme vexation, that S—— W—— had returned, only the week before, his father not approving of certain connexions he had formed at Cologne. The clergyman, however, and his daughters—two plain girls who were very "serious," and well-read, and worked hard at the German language—received me kindly, but not without intimating that they were glad Samuel had returned before my arrival, as we might have got into some mischief together. The clergyman added, for my edification, that "Bonn was a quiet place—the habits of the people were orderly—with the exception of the Students" (I felt my face redden a little as he said this), "all the inhabitants and visitors conducted themselves with regularity, and it was best to adapt one's self to the customs and habits of a foreign

country, so far as our principles would allow," and so forth. He "did not understand what my object was in coming to Bonn, unless it was on account of his son being there, and it was certainly good to know somebody in a foreign country. However, as I was here, I had better make myself comfortable while I staid, and enjoy the innocent amusements and novel simplicities the town afforded." I made a sign to the commissionaire not to unpack the horse-shoes, and, taking him aside, told him to carry the tea, with my card and letter of introduction, to the professor's house, and take back the shoes up into my bedroom at the hotel.

The worthy right-reverend, though somewhat prosy, old gentleman was now so obliging as to propose to accompany me through the town, and assist me in engaging a servant, or getting lodgings, or purchasing anything I might want. We walked through all the best streets, and he took me into various shops, where I bought silks for waistcoats and cravats, and ordered boots of Prince Albert's bootmaker, and a new frock-coat, and bought *eau de Cologne* in a large basket bottle, a couple of painted pipe-bowls (one with the Drachenfels at a distance, the other with the Cathedral of Bonn), and some cigars, and also a German sausage, which I was anxious to taste genuine, in its native place, and to keep by me for occasional use, as I had already discovered that the diet of the Continent was hardly as substantial as I had been accustomed to. He finally

procured me a servant who could not speak above a dozen words of English, but who knew things well, and could understand signs; and then accompanied me to the *Gasthof zum*, &c., which he was kind enough to translate (the Golden Star Hotel), and then wished me good day.

It was one o'clock, and the tables of the saloon were all laid for dinner; so I went up to my bedroom to make some slight preparation for the *table d'hôte*—my first public appearance in Germany. I found all the various articles I had purchased carefully deposited on the table, and the horseshoes on the sofa; but I in vain looked for the bills of my purchases, as I had paid for nothing, the people at the different shops saying and gesticulating "it was no matter." I dressed quickly, a loud bell ringing all the time, evidently a dinner-bell; but I had to tug my things out of the bottom or middle of the portmanteaus in a sad plight, from the rummaging and cramming back at Ostend, so that my appearance in the end was anything but that of a "finished gentleman." I descended, however, in high spirits, and with a capital appetite—it was just the hour we lunch at home in the country.

About a hundred and sixty sat down at the tables—three tables being up and down, and one across at the bottom. There were ladies and gentlemen of all ages, for the most part elegantly dressed—German, English, French, and Belgian, I was informed. I took care to sit next to an Englishman, who could

speak the languages a little ; a very intelligent man. We *table d'hôte* people make a very nice appearance : the sun shone brightly ; nearly everybody was dressed in light or gay colours ; and everybody talked and laughed, and eat and dranked, and bowed and smiled, and paid compliments, and was very happy for three hours at least. We had soup of an odd yet agreeable flavour, to begin with ; and then dishes of fried potatoes and plates of beetroot were handed round, followed by slices of hot baked beef and hot boiled beef, each with its peculiar sauce ; and then cold salt beef, of an Indian red colour, but very mild and tender ; then stewed French beans, and dishes of cauliflower with batter sauce, and flavoured with cinnamon ; followed by small mutton cutlets, accompanied with a minced pickle of red cabbage, green something or other, anchovy-fish, and capers, all chopped small. This was followed by a dish of boiled plums and green-gages, and then came fricasseed chicken, and also a delicate meat of some kind with a sauce of preserved cherries, followed by a dish of cold brawn, or huge sausage, attended with a sauce of cold jelly of bright pink and white colours—bright colours seemed to be much studied in the dishes, so as to please the eye as well as the palate—and this was followed by raw herrings, and immediately afterwards legs and wings of partridges, floating in grease, and an extremely sour salad. After this, dishes were handed round of very bright red shell-fish, like very small boiled lobsters, and then we

had slices of veal and boiled salmon with a sauce of thick yellow batter speckled with capers, and also a jack, and roast duck with peas, and finally, as it seemed, a plum-pudding. It was excellent, this German pudding—nearly all eggs, yet so light!—and was followed by roast mutton with a rich sauce. I thought we were going to have the dinner all over again; however, this was the last dish. And now came sugar cakes, and jellies, and ices, and bon-bons, and peaches (very bad indeed), and cherries, and melon cut in thin slices—much too thin—and vases of flowers, and all sorts of sweet nick-nacks; and all the time the bottles of Sillery Mousseau, and Champagne, and Ehrenbreitsteiner (and Seltzer water, too!) were popping, and sparkling, and flying, and foaming over the tables, and everybody laughing and chatting away, and the Prussian officers in their uniforms and beards throwing dice upon the table for bottles of champagne; and the waiters, dressed like young gentleman on a Sunday at our boarding-schools at home, running to and fro, speaking in German and French; and the loud humming gabble of the various voices and languages of various nations, all going at the same moment; and everybody seeming to understand everybody in the midst of it all—it was really the sort of thing to carry any English country gentleman clean out of his saddle into another state of existence. I would have given a five-pound note to have been allowed to sing out “tantivi! tantivi!” at the top of my voice; but I knew, from experience, that it would be liable to misconstruction.

At about a quarter to three, everybody had quite done eating, and nearly all the gentlemen were smoking, and the ladies gradually retiring. I sallied forth with my cigar (I rather dislike smoking, but I did not wish to appear strange), and strolled round the market-place to look at the shops and the German girls. I bought a velvet travelling cap, and a cloth one for walking, of a very pretty little fat-shouldered girl with two gold necklaces, who insisted upon sending them, though it was only across the way; and she could not, or would not, as it rather seemed, give me change for a sovereign, so that I never paid, and went away, both of us laughing. She spoke all in German, and I all in English, yet we managed to understand each other quite well. I then went to the shop where I had bought the painted pipe-bowls with my friend the clergyman, and exchanged the "Cathedral of Bonn" for one with a most lovely German goddess, who had such eyes, such hair, and such a pair of shoulders! I saw this directly I entered the shop the first time, but I was afraid almost to look at it with my reverend Mentor at my side. I was to pay two or three dollars more, but the master of the shop could give me no change, and said any time would do. I returned to take coffee at the Golden Star, and in the evening a commissionaire took me to a dancing-room. He told me not to pay anything,—he would arrange all that. The dances were entirely waltzing and Polka, so I only looked on, and went back to supper by ten o'clock,—every shop in the town,

except the wine and beer houses, being shut up long since, and all the good folks in bed. They all rise, however, at five or six in the morning.

The next day the German professor did me the honour of calling upon me. He said he brought "much compliments from his wife for the tea." He was a very serious-looking man, but spoke a little English, and was very kind and friendly. He offered to introduce me to several families, and to the Casino Club and its reading-room, and to recommend me any masters I might want, and assist me in prosecuting my "studies." I thanked him in the best manner I could. I felt rather awkward. He proposed to take me to the Casino, which I gladly accepted, and went there, and he introduced me as a subscriber for a month. There were rooms on the ground-floor for billiards and dominoes, and draughts, and cards, and a supper-room, and a reading-room full of books and pamphlets and newspapers, though not a single English one; and there were large saloons above for concerts and dancing. I play very badly at billiards, still I thought I should beat the professor; for what time could so learned a man have ever found to learn a game! To my surprise, however, he played in a most scientific style; did wonders with ease, never missing anything, nor changing countenance. When I was about to pay for the tables, the marker and head waiter said it was a mere trifle to subscribers, and I could pay this with my subscription at any future time. I prevailed

upon the professor to return and dine with me at the Golden Star. The dinner was much the same as on the previous day. The professor left the table rather early, as he had to give a lecture at the University. In the afternoon I went with a commissionaire for a sail on the Rhine; and about sunset we went to one of the floating bath-houses, and I had the romantic pleasure of a swim in the "beautiful Rhine." The commissionaire would not let me give money to any of the boatmen; he said the English spoiled people in this respect.

Three or four days passed in this happy manner, and then the German whom I had engaged as a servant told me he had found me very comfortable lodgings in Coblenz Strasse. He carried my luggage there from the hotel, after my asking in vain for my bill several times, and waiting till I was tired. At my lodgings I had two tolerably large rooms, with no carpets, but the floors painted like a chessboard, and there was very little furniture. The windows looked out upon the garden where vines grew on a trellis, and a fountain played its little spout in the centre. Everything was particularly neat and clean and comfortable, except that the bed, besides having no sort of furniture, was so short that my feet always shot out at the bottom, or else I found on waking in the morning that my head had fallen over the back of the pillow at the other end, as I have seen a calf's head hang over the back of a market-cart in Hertfordshire.

I bought a dressing-gown and slippers, which

were sent home without the bill, and I had forgotten the shop. This, however, was, to all appearance, of no consequence, as I could get nobody to take any money from me. I continued to dine at the Golden Star, but they always forgot to make out my bill. In fact, the hotel was so constantly full of visitors, that I began to fancy that they kept no regular accounts, or that, perhaps, they let every tenth visitor go free. I was the more induced to think something of this kind must be the case, because it seemed to be the same at the large hotel at Godesberg, where I drove one day, accompanied by my friend the clergyman's daughters and governess, and we dined there, and yet I could not pay the bill; not that they objected to take English sovereigns, but they said my paying was not of the least consequence! I really began to think all this devilish odd. I was not used to it.

As the German game of billiards forbids nearly all the easy hazards, and makes the amusement consist in the accomplishment of difficulties resulting from complex calculations, you must absolutely be an excellent player to derive any amusement at all from it. On my second visit, however, to the Casino, one evening, I heard a sound as of the rumbling of a ball, followed soon after by a rattling fall; and this was repeated again and again. I went into the garden to see if it was there, and, following the sound as well as guided by lights and voices, I arrived at a long gallery, full of laughter, smoke, good exercise, and

good company. It was a number of German gentlemen playing at ninepins. I soon learned to join in this; and, the better to understand both the game and the fun, I sent the next time I was going there for my old friend Guy Faux the interpreter, and he always in future went with me, sometimes sitting in one corner, sometimes standing at my elbow, to the great amusement of the gentlemen ninepin-players, who all laughed immoderately when they saw I did not mind it, and enjoyed the joke myself.

I went one day with a party of English tourists, whom I had met at the *table d'hôte*, on an excursion to Rolandsbogen, the Drachenfels, and the little island of Nonnenwerth. We were often in great raptures, and they made all sorts of coloured sketches and glowing descriptions and lyrical poems. Next day I walked out alone about the town, and then a few miles into the country. I recollect observing several things in the streets and fields, which I will just mention as they occur to me. The grass is mowed in all difficult places by women. I have often seen a woman handle a scythe in a masterly and noble manner—with a wide sweep, steady and regular, and with a precision and strength that would have cut a cow's leg off. In the orchards, and among the hillocks and weedy places, the women and girls, bare-legged, and with such calves! the colour of mahogany, cut the grass with small reaphooks, not unlike our billhooks, seizing each tuft in the left-hand, as if it were a thick head of hair, and off it goes in an

instant. When the corn has been cut the shocks are piled up in a circular shape, and have a false top or pointed thatch, the shape of Mother Shipton's hat, as a protection in wet weather. Wheelbarrows have no legs, but lie flat upon their stomachs, when not in action. They are sledge-shaped, and those in the country have the wheel half covered in with basket-work, to prevent entanglement in going through high grass and weedy places. These things show that the people have some "mind." All the German clergymen in Bonn wear Hessian boots. I cannot think why, as the pulpits do not appear much colder than ours; though perhaps it may be to protect their legs from fleas, which I soon found were abundant in all the churches. The simple machinery of the brass lever for opening doors and windows is much better than our arrangements in those respects. German girls have, for the most part, very upright figures, a graceful carriage, and good hair, long and thick; and the method of dressing the back hair in the form of a shell is quite beautiful. The Prussian peasantry, as distinguished from the townspeople, are all ugly—to a girl; men, women, and children, passing by hundreds to market, or by thousands in the religious processions—all ugly, and not one exception. Not a single rosy-faced, blooming, country lass, but all with faces like weather-beaten wood. People of all ages and sexes commonly wear a large gold ring on the forefinger; but the superior class do not consider it as good taste. Many of the little

gardens of poor cottages have grape-vines on a trellis, by way of a hedge. Nobody ever steals grapes, however exposed, nor picks a single bunch, nor touches one,—not even the children. Poultry is very bad, small, and lean. I never met a pig,—in fact, I have never seen or heard one; and there seem to be no fine breeds of horses or dogs; but the dogs bark just like ours,—the accent has no difference. The beds in hotels, as well as private houses, are all very short, though many of the people are tall enough, which shows that German gentlemen do not sleep straight, but with their knees huddled up, summer and winter. Of the fruits and flowers in Bonn, except the garden grapes and the dahlias, there is nothing particular to notice; but they make fireworks in first-rate style. I never saw such rockets, even at Vauxhall, when Simpson was master of the ceremonies there.

The Germans are very kind, good-natured, and extremely hospitable. I had many invitations from my companions at the Ninepin Gallery; but I seldom accepted them, because of the awkwardness of not knowing the language, among ladies in particular; and it was impossible to take Guy Faux with me, though he was perfectly well-behaved. Nevertheless, I dined once or twice with my friend the professor. He often had a dish resembling our celebrated “beans and bacon,” which really surpassed them. It was, perhaps, ham; they called it *shenkin*—a word that was familiar to my ear, because my aunt often

used to play it upon the harp—"Of noble race was Shenkin."

Prince Albert's bootmaker, Mr. Wild, of Cologne-street, sent me home two pairs of admirable articles, and the "fit" perfect. I had only ordered one pair. When I went to pay him he smiled, as though at my simplicity, and told me by signs not to say a word more—it was nothing. I went away with a growing amazement! The tailor had behaved very much in the same manner. Bonn was a strange yet a delightful place. Nobody wanted money. There was a little fair about this time at the outskirts of the town. The girl of the house where I lodged had been very attentive to me, usually contriving to understand what I wanted, even when I had no interpreter with me, and I offered her money to go to the fair, and buy herself a "fairing," and, in order to make my intention quite decisive, I placed it in her hand, pointing in the direction of the fair; but she would not close her hand, and finally, with an amiable and grateful smile, replaced the money upon the table. It was evident that the millennium was approaching, and money was no longer needed in a world of love. At night, when I returned home, I found a fairing for me, placed upon my table. I began to feel my head turning round a little with all this!

I took some English ladies to the fair next day, and, giving money to my servant who followed, insisted upon his paying for all I took, as it appeared that nobody would receive money from me. On our

return to the hotel where I had met them first, one of them showed me some verses she had made to the "Beautiful Rhine," and her brother gave me a copy of a long ode he had composed to the house in Rhein-strasse where Beethoven was born, and promised me copies of seven sonnets he had written to the room where Prince Albert studied philosophy when he was a student at Bonn.

The game of Ninepins merits far higher notice than I have already taken of it. The pins are about a foot and a half tall, the balls weigh some fourteen pounds each, and the course of the ball is about seventy feet. Here do some score of "choice spirits," the *élite* of the physical energy of Bonn, meet every night, and pass two or three hours of true hilarity. They were all German gentlemen; I never met an Englishman there. Now, the game is one requiring considerable strength and great skill. It was amusing and instructive to observe the variety of character in the players, and how their several peculiarities of character were "brought out" as the game proceeded; so that the student of human nature had an opportunity before him equally novel and advantageous for his speculations*.

I often went for a drive in one of the open barouches belonging to the Golden Star, taking with me some friends, German or English, with whom I

* Among all the philosophical lucubrations of modern tourists, we think the above may be regarded as unique.—ED.



made acquaintance, and having Guy Faux on the box, as interpreter in ordinary. I dined usually, on these occasions, at the principal hotel at Godesberg. When I offered to pay, the head waiter looked at me with a smile almost of compassion; so I ceased to think any more of paying. But what *on earth* was the meaning of all this? I mentioned something of this matter one day to a French count, to whom I sat next at dinner at the Golden Star—a man of great information—who told me “that everything was really so cheap in Germany that the people hardly cared about being paid; the things cost them a mere nothing; it was of little consequence.” I had brought out money enough to remain comfortably for a month; but at this rate I might remain for years with the sum scarcely diminished!

I bought a gold chain, and two gold neck-ornaments, as presents for Hertfordshire ladies when I returned home, and more painted pipe-bowls, and a winter coat lined with leopard's skin, and several flasks of *eau de Cologne*, and figured silks for waist-coats, and had them all made up to escape the duty. I began to feel greedy, for the first time in my life. I took a fancy to some silver spurs, and ordered five pairs to be sent to my lodgings; and, as I heard that the genuine German sausage would keep any length of time, I had a considerable quantity (fifteen or sixteen pounds) packed in a fit state for travelling. Whenever I met with any English people who were agreeable to me I always asked them to dine with

me at the Golden Star ; and I also made acquaintance with two or three Prussian officers—capital fellows—and threw dice with them upon the dinner-table, just as I had seen them do, for bottles of champagne. I always lost—but what of that ?

While I was sitting at breakfast one morning I received a note from my friend the English clergyman, informing me that there was an English chapel in the University, where divine service was performed every Sunday. He would make room for me in his pew next Sunday. It was now the first of August. I had been three weeks at Bonn.

It was true, I had never once been to Chapel ! While I was meditating upon the laconic reproof of my reverend friend, some one knocked at my door. It was a tradesman, who, with a low bow and a smile, presented his bill. My first bill in Bonn. He waited a moment, and then retired. But, before he had closed the door, another entered with his bill, and at his heels two more, each with a long bill, and a bow, and the same dreadful smile. Had I really had all these things ? How things mount up ! Then came my servant with his account for a thousand small matters which he had paid—honestly paid, no doubt, but I had taken no note of them. He told me—they *all* told me—to take no note of things. Guy Faux, too, sent in his bill—attendances at nine-pins, and on the box of the d—d old barouche and two nackers. I snatched up my hat. In the passage below I met German goldsmiths and tailors, and Prince

Albert's bootmaker, and commissionaires. "All right! all right!" cried I, frantically bustling through them into the street. The bills had come at last! They were, no doubt, correct enough; but why come all at once?—why this avalanche? What had I done to lose my credit? I had been in a very culpable dream; but what had caused this sudden awakening?

On reaching the corner of the street the first person I met was the grave-faced old English gentleman whom I had so foolishly informed of my never paying for my bed at Ostend. He must have given out that I was a swindler!

I hurried to the Golden Star. The head waiter handed me my bill in a trice. Such a bill! At this moment who should walk in but the English clergyman. He took me aside, and asked me what was all this rumour that had reached him of my being deranged? "Deranged, Sir!" "Yes," said he; "I have heard of your doings at Ostend; of your sending challenges to Students here to fight on horseback; of wild gesticulations in a public breakfast-room; of having an Interpreter to Ninepins; of sending green tea and horseshoes to the library of the University; of purchasing a dozen pairs of silver spurs, and a disgraceful quantity of sausages!"

"Oh, my dear Sir," said I, breathlessly, "the fact is, the people are mad! They are all sending in their bills. The most innocent things are made to appear monstrous, and not a soul but sends in his bill!"

“Well,” said he, with surprise, “they always do once a month. It is the custom in Bonn to trust a those, who are respectably recommended to the shop for the space of a month, and then they send in the bills.”

I tried to laugh and explain. The instant he left me I hurried to the railway station, and took the first train to Cologne, and wrote to my father to send me a letter of credit for seventy pounds by return of post, as I found Germany by no means so cheap as I had expected.

OF EXAGGERATION AND MATTER-OF-FACT PEOPLE.



HE truth should be spoken undoubtedly, and always spoken; that is, when we do speak. Silence may be a lie, under circumstances, but ordinary moralists will scarcely think it cognisable under the head of "telling lies." Not to perplex myself with fine distinctions, how few there are of those who open their mouth, that, with any kind of certainty and constancy, speak the pure truth. I have nothing to say just now of grave and pondered lies of the devil's colour; I advert only to that general laxity and ineptitude of expression in familiar discourse or description, which, with no great dishonesty of meaning, do violence in various degrees to things as they are, and are known to be. Exaggeration strikes one in a moment as the most common among colloquial misdemeanours, though, providing it at once come from the heart, and have some "method in it," I think it by no means unpleasant, nor, with all its boldness so apt to mislead as many figures of a more cold and balancing character. If a man give me the right spirit of things, I can allow him a little harmless licentiousness in piling up of quanti-

ties. If he do not distort and disguise he may magnify, and will not deceive and offend me. Let him not confound black with white, and I will not quarrel with him about *very* black and *very* white. I should stipulate literally and formally for the "true stuff," but, secure of this, a man may intensify it as he pleases, I understand him; I know his ardent ways and liberal measures, and can at any time dilute him down to proof.

There is an inborn tendency in the human mind (where there is mind) to amplification—to swell out beyond the limits of nature and truth. Our souls are too big for our bodies, and our perceptions and impressions pitched too high for the scale and circumstances of the physical world in which we live. Our middle size belies us; we are all Pantagonians in our hearts and our tongues—little creatures with our fifteen hundred steps to a mile, who, nevertheless, find this earth, with its spare deserts and untrodden forests, too circumscribed for our free elbow-room. Our language, our descriptive phrases, however they may be tamed down in signification by common use, have been framed as for a race of giants in a giant world. The more moderate among us, in describing the wonders of a gale, of wind at sea, would scarcely be so narrow-minded as to talk of waves rising thirty or forty feet instead of "mountains high." How should you credit that a man could be wet through two coats, unless he asserverated that it rained "as if heaven and earth were coming together," at the least? "When the louse

feeds," says Buffon, "the blood is seen to *rush like a torrent* into the stomach." Could one have said more in severe justice of a lion?

This sublimity of style will not bear to be tried by the nice weights and measures of truth, yet it is not always adopted with the simple intention to deceive. The difficulty as well as the desire of exciting attention urges us into dishonesty, vehemence, and magnificent misstatements. The world is sufficiently fastidious not to feel curiosity about familiar appearances, common forms, and trite opinions. The only resource, then, is in the extraordinary; the object is not to inform but to surprise, and for this purpose we are driven, not to our experience, but to our invention. We must create; the Alps will not do—we must pile Pelion upon Ossa.

Considerable art, however, is necessary in these daring efforts, or they may fail to produce the notice which they aim at, or any notice at all; mere overgrown exaggeration will not astonish us; if its gross bulk be not quickened with a due proportion of liveliness, it is only so much waste and darkness. Some of our modern dramatists give us heroes and heroines of a monstrous size and shape; but in their anxiety to make them big, they forget to make them men and women; as a ranting actor will tear a passion to rags, one of the improvident poets will blow it up till it is almost choked, and cannot speak to be understood. In their improvements upon the littleness of nature they not only exceed her limits, but disfigure

all her forms and proportions; they are faithful to neither the measure nor the pattern of her works. Their greatness is nothing but corpulency, uninformed with any principle of life and activity. We might bear a Cupid seven feet high, if he retained his accustomed beauty and sprightliness; but it is cruel to see our little favourite tumefied into a dull, unwieldy hump, a sort of anasarcous or Daniel Lambert fairy, with no compensation for the change but in his increased dimensions and stone weight. This style of exaggeration is frequently employed by persons of tame and unimpassioned spirits, and in their hands it is certainly a most deadening and overwhelming instrument. I know not how minds of such a temperament should deviate into such unsuitable vices; but so it is; we often see profound dulness troubled with a strange, lumbering ambition for the great and the wonderful. We do not complain of these heavy fabulists that they strain, pervert, or obscure the truth; they convey no likelihood of it, no sign, no shadow; their uninspired exuberance falling upon you with the dead weight of sheer impossibility. There is often a perfidious solemnity and decorum in the general manner of the sort of persons I allude to, that adds greatly to the perplexity of their hearers. When a vivacious enthusiast bursts out into some violent description, his spirit, his look, tone, and gestures, at once alarm our watchfulness and put us upon our guard. He has no sly and indirect means of lulling our suspicions and cheating us into belief. He may

have his lies which wear their hearts on their sleeves. Not so with your slow, prosing hyperbolist, who, with a steady eye, doles out his cold extravagance and dull excess. You can come to no squares with him, yet you look at him and know not how to understand him. Nothing can be more puzzling.

This anomalous variety excepted, I have rather a kindness than otherwise for a little honest exaggeration, and every species of it, leaden or mercurial, is preferable, I am ready to maintain, to its opposite, cold-blooded, and penurious exactness. The whole host of long-bowmen, light troops, and heavy, are far less annoying, and, paradoxical as it may appear, less hostile to the more essential parts of truth, than the little teasing tribe—the minute, higgling worshippers of matter of fact. A man, who in a transport of passion gives an undue extension to any determinate quantity of time or space, or anything else, does not exaggerate in any ill sense; he deceives nobody except those without passion, the posts of the human race. His object is not to define a frigid reality as established by law, but to describe it according to the impression which it made, and was likely to make upon his mind under a particular state of excitement. He has no thought about “stubborn facts;” he makes them, and very fairly, I think, malleable to his will, and susceptible of any variations of form that his feelings require. People were cool and collected when they set about making facts; and it is very hard that a man in a fury should be bound by them; ready-

made facts will not suit him; they must be all purely his own. He is above statutes and tables, and will own no allegiance to common rules and measures. Surely he must be a very heartless person who will not admit that an hour is not always neither more nor less than sixty minutes, and that a mile is not invariably only a mile. A matter-of-fact man has no conception of such an extravagance: he grants no indulgences, law is law with him, and he will abide by it to death. A mile, he will have it, is a mile; and the worst of it is, he has certain odious proofs and literal standards in his favour, which, backed by his oath, he will quote against a liberal adversary till there seems nothing left for it but to own that the blockhead is correct. In vain you strive to move him from his position by appealing to his passions or his imagination, these gifts in him (if he have them at all) being under such certain control that he carries them about with him as surely and ceremoniously as his gloves and his stick. Never hope to exasperate him into a thought of apostacy from absolute Cocker, London measure, or avoirdupois. He stands out for a fact, and though it be stripped to positive nakedness, or robbed of its living marrow, he will still cling to it, still hug his bit of barren dryness if it be but according to book and "his bond."

I look upon these miserable fribblers as the most intolerable plagues that go about to disturb the ease, cordiality, and trusting freedom of familiar conversation. One of these among a company of lively men

is as bad as the "*Six Acts*;" there is no speaking before him; he lies in wait for every trivial lapse, and is ready to arrest on the spot every unimportant misnomer of time, or place, or person. He will stop a good anecdote, just before its finest moment, to ask for its credentials; and cut off the *dénouement* of a pathetic tale to question its parish. To pun in his presence would be as bad as to deny his existence: he *and equivoque* (the name is enough) could never be brought together but to fight. The humour of the thing, too, is, that these poor starvelings, with their bigoted strictness, and peddling precision, set themselves up for lovers of truth; but the truth is not in them nor for them. A little niggardly truth, perhaps a crumb of certainty, they may pick up; but of truth in its entire spirit, of "the whole truth," they have no notion. They will discriminate between John and Thomas, and authenticate a day of the month with fatal accuracy, and to secure such points, will let the whole interest of a story, catastrophe and all, pass by them "like the wind which they regard not." All that is warm, fluent, and animating in discourse is husk and chaff to them, if there be not something they can swear to: when the joke is complete and the laugh has gone round, "Now," they will say, steady-ing themselves in their chairs and collecting their powers, "let us come to *particulars*." With all their professed antipathy to exaggeration, they are themselves exaggerators of the most contemptible description—those who attach extravagant importance to

trifles and busy themselves to demonstrate circumstances that are not worth a thought. There is something noble at least in the error of a man who exaggerates only what is in itself great and exalted ; but he that would measure a hair, or weigh a feather, is guilty of an hyperbole (if so generous a term is not too good for him) that admits of no excuse. These scrupleists, these baters down, are themselves far more remote from truth generally than those whom they are so pleased to charge with incorrectness. A man overpowered with thirst says that he could drink the Thames dry, and I believe him ; that is, I very distinctly apprehend that he is excessively thirsty. A matter-of-fact man would receive such an assertion as an insult, and would take upon himself to prove, if he could keep from passion, that it was, from the nature of things, an absolute falsehood. He would lay down the maximum of a possible draught, and the way would be clear before him ; he has no allowance for the natural language of an eager appetite, but summons up his soul, with all its experience, to justify the capacity of a quart pot. A lover about to be separated for a few weeks from his mistress affirms that he shall not see her again for ages, and he is perfectly right, or what man of spirit would condescend to fall in love ? Who shall put definite limits to the duration of a week, a day, or an hour, spent in the absence or the presence of a mistress ? The lover, with his weeks a century long, tells you pretty plainly that he is desperately impatient—tells you the truth,

I contend, in contempt of any little huckster in matter of fact, who would compute the ardours of a lover with the same beggarly exactness with which he would measure a yard of tape, or compare the dates of a butcher's bill.

I was walking once in company with two persons, one of whom was a fine, precipitate, *ad libitum* fellow, warm of heart, and hasty of tongue; the other, a simple, direct man, who looked at things in their just proportions, and was nice even to the smallest fractions in all his affirmations. Briefly, I was with an enthusiast and a matter-of-fact man. The former was miserable, and had every reason to be so, in regard both to his existing condition and his future prospects. He suddenly broke forth, "I never expect to be in any way better off than the wretched beggar there before us." "Yes, yes," interposed his friend, more readily than was usual with him, "with prudence you may be a degree better as long as you live." The warm man could not bear this, and he angrily retorted, "Now, d—— it! can you never be a little less precise? You mean, I suppose, to comfort me; yet what consolation is it to be assured that I am and may be just a degree—after your freezing manner—a strict, exemplary degree, above the lowest of my species?" The other still kept his temper and insisted modestly, but resolutely, "that a degree was a degree," and there the matter ended.

I would not be understood to object to precision

and minuteness when these qualities are important, or when they can be attended to without disturbance to points of higher consideration. The most subordinate circumstances and different relations of great events may be interesting in the same manner as trifles, down to a buckle or a shirtpin, are worth notice, when connected with persons distinguished by extraordinary actions or talents. I would have all given of things that are worth giving: what is admirable cannot be too complete. I complain not of the matter-of-fact man on such grounds, but that the little parts of high matters, or of all matters—those which by their nature are alone reducible to an arithmetical certainty—are the *sole* object of his regard. Affecting to worship Truth, he sees her not in her full majesty, but overlooks her covering robes and flowing draperies (to speak of something more than “the naked truth”) to fasten upon a button. He would mention no particulars of the great storm with such unqualified satisfaction as that it commenced at twenty-three minutes past four A.M. on the 6th November, A.D. 1723. Of facts of mind and feeling he makes no account: he must have facts in a ring fence, realities of the almanack. He cares not to hear that a man died: he must know *where* he died and *when* he died.

Persons of this stamp make excellent lawyers: they should never travel out of Westminster-hall. In the intricacy and darkness of the law there is an obvious fitness in that watchful jealousy which would

as soon see a kingdom overthrown as a name or a date abused. But a matter-of-fact man will carry the captious spirit of a legal process into his moral judgments, turn lawyer against himself, cross-question the evidence of his own heart, cheat himself, against his broadest convictions, into a kind of accidental innocence, deliver himself from a piece of conscious roguery, because his name is not Timothy. He has always some pretty flaw or lucky difference that will suffice, at a pinch, for a "not guilty," after the manner of the charity-boy who robbed a woman's orchard, and, being asked whether that was the way in which he performed his "duty to his neighbour," replied, that the old lady lived in another parish. These people affect extreme indignation at the scandalous opinion of the world, if, in appreciating their conduct, it makes some light error in particulars, though it may be perfectly just in its general spirit and bearing. Fame avers that Mr. Shuffle cheated the other night at cards to the amount of thirteen shillings and sixpence, and that, therefore, he is a knave; against which decision he contends that the sum was only twelve shillings, and that, therefore, he is an honest man. Mr. D—— is universally reported to be always drunk: he is mightily out of humour, however, with so gross a charge, and makes out clearly enough that he was sober one part of last Thursday and the whole of Palm Sunday. Mrs. F—— is said to wear a wig, at which she is grievously offended, proving that she wears only a *front*,

and that even that does not cover more than three-fourths of her head. There is no defence against such slanderous imputations as these but patience: the innocent, we see, are not safe. "I am accustomed," says Voltaire, "to bear patiently the invectives of an ill-natured world; in this respect resembling the ladies, who are often accused of having had twenty lovers when they never exceeded three."

Matter-of-fact men, it might be thought, would form admirable soldiers; and so they would, no doubt, as far as a formal attention to the petty detail of an imperious discipline could make them so; but such a habit would not often be found combined, I fancy, with the impetuous heroism and daring which, as Buonaparte was the first in modern times to prove, is so much more effective, as an instrument of war, than a dull system of rigorous drilling and intricate manœuvres. The Germans are matter-of-fact soldiers—no troops being so remarkable, more by force of education, I believe, than of natural temperament, for their submission to an unvarying formality in all their martial movements. They do nothing extempore, nothing by accident, surrendering themselves up, as Madame de Staël says, to "a sort of pedantic tactics," in the place of liveliness and enterprise. They would despise defeat if "according to rule," and scarcely prize victory if in opposition to it. Methodical and predetermined in all their proceedings, you may calcu-

late, to the division of a degree, what they can do and will do ; but never expect from them one of those fine hairbrained and dazzling exploits which are sometimes achieved by some flighty spirits, under the impulse only of a stubborn will and reckless confidence.

I remember a curious instance of military exactness in the conduct of a soldier (a German by the way) who was stationed as a sentinel at Margate Pier-head, during a night storm of tremendous violence, in the course of which nearly the whole pier was destroyed by an irruption of the sea, the high street of the town undermined, and many of the houses washed down. In this dreadful night, which was made more bitter by a fall of snow and intense cold, the poor fellow stuck to his station till his life was in the most imminent danger. He was found by some seamen, who went to his relief, clinging to a post, and with great difficulty maintaining his hold against the sea which dashed over him, and which, not long after his removal, swept away the very ground on which he had stood, and made a free passage into the harbour. When he was asked how he could be such a fool as to stay there only to be drowned, he barely said that "he had no thought of moving till he was *relieved*, and that it still wanted a full half-hour of the time." Had this devotedness to duty and contempt of nature been shown for any useful or generous purpose, I could have worshipped the man ; but I have no great consideration for the

mere steady stupidity which could hold him fast at such a moment, and at such a risk, when he had no worthier pretence than his respect for the formalities of the parade. This man, who would not stir from his useless post to save his own life, would not have stirred, I suspect, to save the whole town from destruction. And herein is the danger of trusting too freely to such minds, on the strength only of their slavish docility and literal obedience. They are very well while the road is straight, but they are lost without resource whenever they come to a turning. My affection, I confess, is for men of a warmer, more adventurous and inventive, kind, who, in spite of their occasional errors of exaggerative precipitancy, are, take them for all in all, better framed for the mingled and shifting circumstances of human action and suffering. If my way lay through a travelled country, I would put up with a Scotchman, or a worse man, as my guide over the exact road—the true bridges—and the right fords; but if my unprecedented journey was over a pathless desert, obstructed by quagmires and quicksands, and fruitful of accidents, requiring sudden plans, and sudden changes of plans, I would choose for my leader an Irishman. A *bull*, it may be insinuated, would be an awkward matter in a bog, but I abide by my preference notwithstanding. The Irishman would blunder through with me, or I am mistaken.

JULIA AND LYSIUS.

IN Ravenna, an ancient city of Italy, was a certain judge, of great wisdom and piety; much honoured, and enjoying the good esteem of his friends. He had but one child, a daughter, named Julia, of tender years, of the greatest beauty, and most delicately brought up.

It happened that he took a secretary into his house to dwell with him and manage some part of the weighty public business that devolved upon him. This youth's name was Lysius, a scholar, and, at bottom, of the deepest feeling. Julia no sooner saw him than she loved him, and laid her beauty at his feet; and, being of a sensitive and delicate nature, and continually in his company, her colour faded, and her deep yearnings of affection touched every thought with melancholy. Lysius liked her as a beautiful woman, but was too indifferent to the delicacy of her affection; so that she was continually looking on a blank.

Her father, seeing her health thus decline, began to ask after the cause; and, at length, going into her bedchamber one morning, as she lay awake, he took her hand between his, and said, "My dear daughter, I have long forborne, from great delicacy, to question you of the cause of this your sickness of mind; but so does it affect me, that I find I cannot go about my daily occupations, and leave you

so rarely afflicted, without offering what consolation I can to you. My child, thy peace is as precious to me as my life; nevertheless, I know you to be mistress of so delicate a sense, that if you feel disinclined to impart to me your thoughts, do not do it; and I will take more patience to myself till time, that healeth all wounds, shall have fulfilled the will of Heaven on thy desires." Julia was silent, and hung down her head; but, presently, bursting into tears, she hid her face in his bosom, saying, "Father, my heart is almost broken." He began to sooth and comfort her; when she looked up and told him of her affection. And he said, "Heaven is above these things. I will not be thy father so much in authority as in friendliness. To-morrow we will talk of this matter." But she answered eagerly, "Now! I pry-thee, now! I can bear anything now, but have no fortitude for to-morrow. Counsel me what I am to do." And her father said, "The truth is best to be told in these matters. Hitherto thy happiness has been in my hands, and thou hast been happy; but now it goes from me. I think thy passion is foremost: I do not think this youth loves you, and it is not delicate in us to ask him in marriage." Julia began weeping afresh, and said, "In matters of this nature we may sometimes break through the common laws. I think I could ask him to marry me." Her father, seeing her thus bent on it, kissed her, and said, "Though his fortunes are most mean compared to thine, and his

estate low, yet, if he like it, you shall be his wife; and, if he take thee, I pray that he may grow into that passion for thee that thy tender nature deserves. I will send messengers to say that I cannot attend the court to-day, and will go about this thing; I shall do all for the best; so I hope you will contrive, in the meanwhile, to be somewhat comfortable." And, kissing her and blessing her, he went from her chamber. The great kindness of Julia's father wrought upon her heart; and the sudden hope that she was willing to entertain, arising from despair, thrilled her with an ecstasy that was but seldom damped with the sad thought of failure.

Her father went into the garden and walked some time, thinking; then, sending for Lysius, he led him into a chamber, and, sitting opposite to him, he told him of his daughter's passion, and his willingness to lay good fortune on him; but to ponder on it, and have a care that he did not by future neglect waste his child's life. And, for all the severity of his speech, a tear stood in his eye. Lysius answered, "Sir, if I were insensible to the beauty of your child I must be more than stone; but affection is a matter of deep birth, and cannot be called up of one's own accord. I do more honour your daughter than love her; but, considering my poorness of fortune, and the good estate I shall receive at your hands, I will so far bind myself as to marry your daughter, and will do all in my power to behave virtuously towards her; teaching myself (if it may be so) continual

lessons of affection, so that in time I may perhaps fully answer her passion; but this is in the hands of fate. I will at all hazards treat her delicately and honourably." The old man, hearing this, approved of his open manner of speech and the confession of his feelings, embraced him, and went instantly to his daughter and told her of what had passed, than which nothing more could rejoice her; so that she despised her bed and arose and went into the air. Lysius, seeing her walking in the garden, came to her, and kissed her, and began to converse with her. All was bustle and merriment, and, in a week, everything was ready for the marriage.

It happened that Lysius, who was highly related in Athens, received word suddenly, saying, that the two youths who stood in his way to an immense estate had fallen in a quarrel by each other's hands, and were dead and inviting him to come and take possession of his riches. Now, when Lysius heard this, he bethought him how he should act; first, inquiring the truth of this matter, and, finding it correct, he went to the apartment of the judge, and spoke to him as follows: "The news that I have to tell you at once grieves and rejoices me. When I said I would marry your daughter I was a beggar. I told you that I did not love her; but, considering the good estate I should arrive to, and her passion, I was willing to take her on such conditions, which are now altered, leaving only her passion, for I am lord and master of immense revenues. I propose



to live the life of a wealthy man, and, being a great admirer of woman's beauty, and my affections free, I cannot now bind myself to the benefit of her passion alone." After a pause the judge said, "I am afraid my daughter will die in consequence." Lysius replied, "It grieves me, but we must part here." So saying, he took horse and went to Athens.

Now, when Julia's father told this, she stifled much of her grief, and, seeing his great pain for her, called to aid an independence of spirit, and for some time made a desperate head against her affliction; hiding her tears and sighs, and groaning but seldom, and in secret, at her hard fate. But her father saw what was passing in her heart, and was miserable. The days and nights proved too long for her, and she went mad for many months. She sat half in her grave and half out; and it was the falling of an autumn leaf whether she lived or died. But, the violence of her feeling abating, her senses gradually returned. As nature mouldereth to its sweetest shape after a wasteful storm, so she gathered her reason, and, because of her father, made great efforts towards her peace. Three years passed over her head, yet she was nothing altered, save in declining to her last bed by fast degrees.

Her father, seeking by all means to amuse her mind, had built a cell behind a buttress close where he held his seat in the court of justice, and provided it with curtains, so that she could see and hear all that passed of interest, without being herself per-

ceived. It happened that, one morning, Julia being present, a man in tattered apparel, with a staff in his hand, and like a beggar, was brought before them on a charge of murder. No one knew aught of him, or who he was, nor would he describe himself; but Julia's sense was quick, and she knew him to be Lysius; and, holding her forehead for some minutes, she departed from the court.

Lysius, having come to his estate, had joined the noisy and luxurious youth of Athens; and, never thinking that wells may be drawn dry, he went on scattering his money on one worthless banquet and another, till his lands were gaged, his coffers empty, and he obliged to fly for fear of imprisonment for heavy debts. And here he stood, in this deplorable condition, before Julia's father, to answer to the crime of murder. Although he avowed his innocence, yet circumstances were so clear against him, and fortune was so much his enemy, that everybody adjudged him guilty, and he was doomed to death at the sunset of that day. Now, when Julia left the court, she beat with her hand upon her heart, and collecting all her firmness, went into the garden and gathered berries, with which she dyed her face and neck; and, tying her hair in knots, and clothing herself in ragged apparel, like a wandering beggar, she made her way through the press in the court, just as Lysius was being carried away to prison; and, standing up before her father, said, "Hold, you man of justice, truly blind; you know not what you do!

What poor things, ye gods! are mortals in your eyes, if the gravest of us thus play with each other's lives. Be it known unto you this man is innocent. I slew him who is dead, and confess myself guilty of the murder: my motive was jealousy; his crime, neglect of me. Set him free, I pray you; and, O ye gods! take of me the weary life that I have held so long, nor ever dreamt of using it as I now do." It now being the close of the court, and the judges, having some difference in this affair, suspended the execution; and ordered that early in the morning they should appear before them to pass sentence on the woman and release the accused; so they were both conveyed out, and put into two dungeons. Now, Julia, feeling for her father, and to put him off his guard from discovering her, had written to him, saying, "if I do not return to-night, consider me safe and happy." So that he felt no alarm, having full confidence in her; and was inwardly glad that she showed an inclination for anything. When the morning came, sentence was taken off Lysius, and passed upon her by her own father, who condemned her to present death.

But fate was fickle in this, and would not permit it; for the man who appeared slain, after long seeming dead, showed some signs of animation; and he found his senses, and voice enough to accuse his murderers, who, being apprehended, confessed their crime, and the whole of them had just come into court. The judges were amazed at this matter, and

also was Lysius; and they said, "Woman, why hast thou deceived us, and thus cast thy life at fortune? Albeit thou hast saved the life of a fellow-creature, we understand it not." She replied, "Stifle your amazement. The gods are above. We two are declared innocent. I know not why, my soul, but I have some hope." Saying this, she took Lysius's hand and kissed it, and a tear fell on it; so she departed. When she touched him he trembled like a child (for he knew her), but was dumb with remorse and wonder. After this time Julia became more peaceful, seeing she had saved her lover's life.

Now, away went Lysius into Athens, full of love and affection for Julia, wondering at himself and the greatness of her act. He came to his steward, gathered his books together, and worked from light till dark, beginning at the peep of morning, and closing only at the shut of day. He examined his accounts, closed with those to whom he owed money, and was red with shame, and shuddered at the wreck of fortune he had strewn upon so barren a strand, while such a woman as Julia would lay down her life for him, though ruined, and a beggar. In the course of one year he had gathered money enough from his former waste to provide for the present in splendour. So he went from Athens like a prince, with choice youth about him, with music and banners, followers, and horsemen, habited in gold and silver apparel, bearing gifts; and, coming to Ravenna, he went to Julia's house and embraced her father.

When she came into the hall she wondered who this stranger could be, but, when he fell at her feet, thanking her for his life, asked pardon for the past, and besought her hand, she shouted and fainted in his arms.

They were married the next day, and lived only for each other; their happiness increasing with their wealth and family.



THE MAGIC PHIAL;
OR, AN EVENING AT DELFT.



“NOW,” said the portly Peter Von Voorst, as he buttoned up his money in the pockets of his capacious breeches, “now I’ll home to my farm, and

to-morrow I'll buy neighbour Jan Hagen's two cows, which are the best in Holland."

He crossed the market-place of Delft as he spoke, with an elated and swaggering air, and turned down one of the streets which led out of the city, when a goodly tavern met his eye. Thinking a dram would be beneficial in counteracting the effects of a fog which was just rising, he entered, and called for a glass of schiedam. This was brought, and drank by Peter, who liked the flavour so much that he resolved to try the liquor diluted. Accordingly, a glass of a capacious size was set before him. After a few sips of the pleasing spirit, our farmer took a view of the apartment in which he was sitting, and, for the first time, perceived that the only person in the room besides himself was a young man of melancholy aspect, who sat near the fireplace, apparently half asleep. Now, Peter was of a loquacious turn, and nothing rendered a room more disagreeable to him than the absence of company. He, therefore, took the first opportunity of engaging the stranger in conversation,

"A dull evening, mynheer," said the farmer.

"Yaw!" replied the stranger, stretching himself, and yawning loudly, "very foggy, I take it;" and he rose, and looked into the street.

Peter perceived that his companion wore a dress of dark brown, of the cut of the last century. A thick row of brass buttons ornamented his doublet; so thickly, indeed, were they placed, that they appeared

one stripe of metal. His shoes were high-heeled and square-toed, like those worn by a company of maskers, represented in a picture which hung in Peter's parlour at Voorbooch. The stranger was of a spare figure, and his countenance was, as before stated, pale; but there was a wild brightness in his eye, which inspired the farmer with a feeling of awe.

After taking a few turns up and down the apartments, the stranger drew a chair near to Peter, and sat down.

"Are you a burgher of Delft?" he inquired.

"No!" was the reply; "I am a small farmer, and live in the village of Voorbooch."

"Umph!" said the stranger, "you have a dull road to travel! See! your glass is out. How like ye mine host's schiedam?"

"'Tis right excellent."

"You say truly," rejoined the stranger, with a smile, which the farmer thought greatly improved his countenance; "but here is a liquor which no burgomaster in Holland can procure. 'Tis fit for a prince."

He drew forth a phial from the breast of his doublet, and, mixing a small quantity of the red liquid it contained with some water that stood on the table, he poured it into Peter's empty glass. The farmer tasted it, and found it to excel every liquid he had ever drunk. Its effect was soon visible; he pressed the hand of the stranger with great

warmth, and swore he would not leave Delft that night.

"You are perfectly right," said his companion; "these fogs are unusually heavy; they are trying, even to the constitution of a Hollander. As for me, I am nearly choked with them. How different is the sunny clime of Spain, which I have just left."

"You have travelled, then?" said Peter, inquiringly.

"Travelled! ay, to the remotest corner of the Indies, amongst Turks, Jews, and Tartars."

"Eh! but does it please ye to travel always in that garb, mynheer?"

"Even so," replied the stranger; "it has descended from father to son, through more than three generations. See you this hole on the left breast of my doublet?"

The farmer stretched out his neck, and by the dim light perceived a small perforation on the breast of the stranger's doublet, who continued—

"Ah! the bullet that passed through it lodged in the heart of my great grandsire, at the sack of Zutphen."

"I have heard of the bloody doings at that place from my grandfather—Heaven rest his soul!"

Peter was startled on perceiving the unearthly smile which played over the countenance of the stranger on his hearing this pious ejaculation. He muttered to himself, in an inaudible tone, the word *Duyvel*! but was interrupted by the loud laugh of his

companion, who slapped him on the shoulder, and cried, "Come, come, mynheer, you look sad; does not my liquor sit well on your stomach?"

"'Tis excellent!" replied Peter, ashamed to think that the stranger had observed his confusion: "will you sell me your phial?"

"I had it from a dear friend, who has been long since dead," replied the stranger; "he strictly enjoined me never to *sell* it, for, d'ye see, no sooner is it emptied than, at the wish of the possessor, it is immediately refilled; but, harkee, as you seem a man of spirit, it shall be left to chance to decide who shall possess it." He took from his bosom a bale of dice: "I will stake it against a guilder."

"Good," said Peter; "but I fear there is some devilry in the phial."

"Pshaw!" cried his companion, with a bitter smile, "those who have travelled understand these things better. Devilry, forsooth!"

"I crave your pardon," said Peter; "I will throw for it;" and he placed a guilder on the table.

The farmer met with ill luck, and lost. He took a draught of his companion's liquor, and determined to stake another guilder; but he lost that also! Much enraged at his want of success, he drew forth the canvass bag which contained the produce of the sale of his corn, and resolved either to win the phial (the contents of which had gone far to fuddle his senses), or lose all. He threw again with better luck; but, elated at this, he played with less caution,

and in a few minutes was left penniless. The stranger gathered up the money, and placed it in his pocket.

"You are unlucky to-night, mynheer," said he, with provoking indifference, which greatly increased the farmer's chagrin; "but come, you have a goodly ring on your finger; will you not venture that against my phial?"

The farmer paused for a moment—it was the gift of an old friend; yet he could not stomach the idea of being cleared of his money in such a manner; what would Jan Brower, the host of the *Van Tromp*, and little Kip Winkelaar, the schoolmaster, say to it? It was the first time he had ever been a loser in any game, for he was reckoned the best hand at ninepins in his village; he, therefore, took the ring from his finger, threw again, and lost it!

He sank back in his chair with a suppressed groan, at which his companion smiled. The loss of his money, together with this ring, had nearly sobered him, and he gazed on the stranger with a countenance indicative of anything but good will; while the latter drew from his bosom a scroll of parchment.

"You grieve," said he, "for the loss of a few paltry guilders; but know that I have the power to make you amends for your ill luck—to make you rich—ay, richer than the Stadtholder!"

"Ha! the fiend!" thought Peter, growing still soberer, while he drank in every word, and glanced at the legs of the stranger, expecting, of course, to

see them, as usual, terminate with a cloven foot; but he beheld no such unsightly spectacle; the feet of the stranger were as perfect as his own, or even more so.

"Here," said his companion, "read over this, and, if the terms suit you, subscribe your name at foot." The farmer took the parchment, which he perceived was closely written, and contained many signatures at the bottom. His eye glanced hastily over the first few lines, but they sufficed.

"Ha! now I know thee, fiend!" screamed the affrighted Peter, as he dashed the scroll in the face of the stranger, and rushed wildly out of the room. He gained the street, down which he fled with the swiftness of the wind, and turned quickly, thinking he was safe from the vengeance of him who he now supposed to be no other than the foul fiend himself, when the stranger met him on the opposite side, his eyes dilated to a monstrous size, and glowing like red-hot coals. A deep groan burst from the surcharged breast of the unfortunate farmer as he staggered back several paces.

"Avaunt! avaunt!" he cried, "Satan, I defy thee! I have not signed that cursed parchment!" He turned and fled in the opposite direction; but, though he exercised his utmost speed, the stranger, without any apparent exertion, kept by his side. At length he arrived at the bank of the canal, and leaped into a boat which was moored alongside. Still his pursuer followed, and Peter felt the iron grasp of his hand on

the nape of his neck. He turned round and struggled hard to free himself from the gripe of his companion, roaring out in agony, "Oh! Mynheer Duyvel! have pity, for the sake of my wife and my boy Karl!" But when was the devil ever known to pity? The stranger held him tightly, and spite of his struggles, dragged him ashore. He felt the grasp of his pursuer like the clutch of a bird of prey, while his hot breath almost scorched him; but disengaging himself, with a sudden bound, he sprang from his enemy, and—pitched headlong from his elbow-chair on the floor of his own room at Voorbooch.

The noise occasioned by the fall of the burly Hollander aroused his affrighted helpmate from the sound slumber she had been wrapped in for more than two hours, during which time her husband had been indulging in potations deep and strong, until overpowered with the potency of his beloved liquor, he had sunk to sleep in his elbow-chair, and dreamed the hellish dream we have endeavoured to relate. The noise of his fall aroused his *wrow* from her slumbers. Trembling in every limb on hearing the unruly sound below, she descended by a short flight of steps, screaming aloud for help, into the room where she had left her spouse when she retired to rest, and beheld Peter, her dear husband, prostrate on the stone floor, the table overturned, his glass broken, and the remainder of the accursed liquor flowing in a stream from the stone bottle which lay upset on the floor.

A CHAPTER ON FAITH.



ND now abideth faith, h
charity—these three ; but
greatest of these is chari
saith St Paul, admirably for
purpose ; yet is Faith really
greatest, for it includes the
others ; while charity is in i
an imperfect thing. To be
ritable implies that we arro
to ourselves the right to judge others, but tha
the generosity of our pride, we waive our righ
pass sentence, and are lenient. Charity is a virt
sweet savour that takes its root in a vice—arrog
But you should “judge not.” The man of a
faith will trust in the beginning and the end, and
not presume to judge. Thorough Faith is more st
fast than Hope. Hope regards only the issue acc
ing to our wish ; whereas Faith is a double hope,
makes us rejoice with a full conscience in the iss
our wish, and accept with trustingness also wher
wish is frustrated. Faith makes us contented
modest. It is the want of it which makes me
authority commit the political sin of over-go
ment ; which makes priesthoods dogmatize in
gion ; which makes men meddle with each oth
compel social laws that are supererogatory or

All that is good and happy in humanity is born of Faith—Faith is the universal Good that is manifest in the universe, whereof his kind is part.

It is the want of it, also, which makes him who yearns for the advancement of his kind falter and despond—yield his aspirations and his struggles in a self-despised apostasy of outward observance, or desperately court martyrdom with suicidal extravagancy of zeal. Such men read the history of the world in vain. Speaking of astronomical controversies, in which he had formerly taken part, Professor Nichol expresses a sentiment that forms a just and striking rebuke alike to the faint hearted and the presumptuous:—

“I have no longer the belief that, unless in monstrous cases, men are either hypocrites or purposely opponents of truth. The cause of the difficulty experienced in introducing a new truth among our systems lies in a different direction, and even involves the *thoroughness* with which men believe. The belief of every sincere man is not speculative with him, but inwound with his moral nature, and every practical habit. As age increases, it becomes more and more difficult to uproot habits; just because the old man cannot again become young. Hence the world advances by great steps only—intervals of generations; and hence to the individual the beneficence of death.”

To the individual, and also to his kind; or we should be restricted to the opinions of each genera-

tion. The speculative guess of one generation becomes the contested opinion of the next, the axiom or dogma of the third. The advocate of the new opinion, or still more the speculator, is at issue with his generation; they have not faith in his good faith, nor faith in the prevailing and immortal power of Goodness, which must survive the brief antics even of the most mischievous men; and therefore they, profiting by a past change, persecute those who prepare or even foresee, the change for the next generation. But that inevitable scepticism, which affects to be the antagonist of scepticism, has not prevented the progress of the world thus far, nor should it daunt any who are strong in faith. Though the innovator be persecuted, perchance his opinions will prevail when all who now live are swept away; though the laws and customs which he is compelled to observe, under pain of some sort of martyrdom, are bad, they are likely to be better than those which have passed, and were once the end for which innovators struggled—just as he now struggles for what has not yet been, but will one day reign, and yet another day pass away. The bigot of this time reflects the reformer of a past age; the reformer of the present foreshadows the opinions that will be clung to by the bigot of the future. There is no room here for contempt: we are all too much alike—too little one “above” or before another; and at all events impatience is as idle as if we pushed against a rock to make the world go round faster.

A more fatal doubt to all healthy activity of mind

is that which seizes the modest or the timid—whether it is not presumptuous to differ from “all the world.” There is, however, no opinion by which we now set store, as marking the progress of mankind, but what was once held by the few at variance with “all the world.” “Will you then,” cries the bigot, “pretend to think yourself the man appointed, as wiser than all the world, to lead the next generation?” Not at all; but let each man obey and avow his convictions, and our common progress will be all the more rapid and sure.

We must then begin by ascertaining what are our convictions, apart from mere habits of thought foisted upon us at second-hand; and to do that we must strip the larger questions of all assumptions with which they are surrounded, reducing them to their primary and essential parts. That is the first step in ascertaining what is worth contest—what is that by which we are bound to stand; that is the best way in which we can set the example of obeying conviction; that is the way to save waste of exertion, and perhaps of danger, by simplifying the discussion. Let us rapidly glance at the effect of such a process on the three branches of that vital subject, the conduct of life—Government, Laws, and Custom—the tyrants of imperfect civilization.

In discussing the subject of Government, it has been disguised by two sweeping assumptions—“divine right,” and the “social compact.” The divine right presumes the rule over mankind to have been dele-

gated by a Supreme Power to a particular family or class, and it depends for its existence entirely on the uninquiring acquiescence of the governed. In this country its assertion has nearly disappeared. But the "social compact" is still a bugbear with many, and may be found lurking in authors who are still at least nominally esteemed—Hobbes for instance. There has very seldom been anything like such a compact in the history of nations,—even among republics. The Greek republics, if we can make a guess through the haze of antiquity, were arranged by a few, or took their shape in sudden changes, much more like chance than deliberate bargaining. In Lacedæmon the "compact" existed within a city, to tyrannize over a district. In Italy of the middle ages, whose republic cities—excluding Venice, which never was anything of the kind—presented the nearest resemblance to a social compact; but it was rather a perpetual social contest. The truest republics are those of our own time—the United States of Switzerland and those of America; but even there, anything like a compact is very imperfect, and Switzerland is so feeble, that it is not really independent. The republic is a form of government of such slow growth, that, although it has improved with the progress of the world, we have not yet had a complete specimen. Indeed, before any people can frame and sanction a true social compact, they must be far better educated than any that have yet existed.

If we glance around nations contemporary with

ourselves, in different stages of development, we find that government *originates* in might, and that it is *upheld* and modified by public opinion. It should be borne in mind that public opinion always deals with two classes of subjects, positive and negative—what *ought* to be done, and what *can* be done; and one class is always in advance of the other—the desirable before the possible. In the rudest nations there is no government but usage—as among the aborigines of Australia; in those a grade higher in the scale of civilization, personal force acquires a precarious tenure of government—as among the aborigines of New Zealand or North America; then come the despotisms of the East—controlled by a rude kind of public opinion which breeds intrigue and assassination, and by religion; then the overgrowth of official power—that is, the art of government as a professional monopoly cultivated by the few to the exclusion of the many—such as we see in Austria or Italy; then the struggle of the people, by their representatives, for a share of power—as we see in modern Greece, and shall see in Italy; then the “constitutional monarchies” of Western Europe—where the people, after a very imperfect fashion, have attained a large share of power—most fully developed in England; and lastly, the true republic—as in the United States of America, where the people have acquired the political power, but not the art of government, because they have not yet unlearned many bigotries and old habits, derived

from monarchies and hierarchies, which obstruct the sincere expression of opinion, or even the free formation of opinion. So imperfect is freedom in that country, that a whole class of the inhabitants live in a state of bondage, and their claims must not be canvassed at the peril of him who attests them. Still, immense is the progress from the state of the Australian to that of the English or American people; and rapid has it been since the people have begun to inquire and reason for themselves.

One ready consideration alone would prevent the despondency of the progressist, and sustain his faith—the vast scope of the subject forbids such a thing as a preconceived plan of government for a nation. The circumstances and contingencies are so infinitely multitudinous and fortuitous, as to be altogether beyond the calculation of the acutest, boldest, and largest intellect. The details of government have therefore grown up fortuitously. Also, the very progress of opinion keeps the details unsettled, and even shifts or alters principles. There must, in any great country, be many things in the method of government which the few who are “in advance of their age” will deem bad, many which the multitude also will consider bad, but which they have not yet agreed upon the means of altering. But, in a broad sense, each government will be better than that which went before it.

One means by which government is both asserted and modified is the Law; which is a kind of supple-

ment to government, with *addenda* and *corrigenda*. Hitherto, the laws have become more complicated as the nation has become freer, because the fresh laws have been applied empirically to meet each new want; and also because, while classes are struggling for power, it is needful, in order to anything like fixity, to have every debatable point down in the bond. But that is a very crude and clumsy method of attaining justice; and when a still further stage of freedom has been reached—when power has found its level, and man, in a better knowledge of his kind, has attained a firmer faith—laws will become simplified again, until possibly they are reduced to mere principles of equity. At present, confounding the accidents of traditional habit with nature, each class suspects the other of inherent vices; the poor suspect innate love of despotism in the rich; the rich, revolution in the poor; because, hitherto, in the haphazard progress of the world, the rich have exercised the despotism—the poor, the revolution. While such suspicion lasts, whoever can, will have his rights set down literally in the bond, and we shall have the vast statute-book still increasing.

Civil laws are chiefly in aid of private arrangements, bargains between man and man, or “vested interests” not violently disputed; and they will always conform with tolerable exactness to the general purport of public opinion—the expressed wish of the people. It is the coercive laws, shaped principally

by the governing power, whatever that is, which exhibit the defects that belong to a backward state of opinion. Correctional discipline relates to two classes of offences—things which are “*mala in se*,”—“evils in themselves,” and instinctively recognised as such; and “*mala prohibita*”—things set down as “evils forbidden,” at the pleasure of the legislature. Great mistakes may be made as to what things are “bad in themselves;” but on the whole, that is a more obvious class than the other, and it is in the extent of its category of *mala prohibita* that the crudeness of opinion is developed by a nation. Of course, every addition to the arbitrary prohibitions of things not bad in themselves is a violation alike of natural freedom, and natural justice, though it is possible that it may be necessary to make up for some defects in the imperfect state of the body of laws. For instance, the bringing of wine straight from the Continent to this country is not *malum in se*; but, in order to screw a revenue out of a people dissatisfied with their control over expenditure, and not convinced of the necessity for the income, it is made *malum prohibitum*. The evil of this category of laws, which is altogether a vice and flaw in our system, does not stop with the violation of natural freedom and justice; but, by occasioning undue exercises of correctional discipline, it wastes the controlling influence that ought to be used for the mere keeping of order, and brings it into contempt by prostituting its authority—

making the people confound right and wrong. In a perfect state of society, *mala prohibita* would altogether disappear from the statute-book; but, until society be perfect, such "offences" will stand prohibited; and yet, unless we would go back to the condition of the aborigines in Australia, we must obey the laws. It becomes very desirable, therefore, to devise some principle for defining the boundary between *mala in se* and *mala prohibita*—things essentially bad, and those artificially made so. It may be done to some extent by collating the suffrages of several countries; for as *mala prohibita* have no foundation in our natural instincts, or but a very slight and remote one, they will differ with the contingencies in the social history of different nations. But there will be far less difference respecting the *mala in se*: we may at any one time be content to take for granted that what *all* nations agree to regard as bad, is so in itself; but that what is condemned by some, and licensed or sanctioned by the rest, is not so. We should obey "the law," because it is our shield against what is bad in itself, and because it should be preserved until brought to perfection, and limited to that category; but we should not yield up our consciences to be enthralled by the spurious bond of mere prohibitions, or we give up our intelligence and liberty of thought—the very things that will help us, in common with our kind, to struggle for a perfect law.

But the most potent influence over us is that

of use and custom: it is that which controls every act that we do, in private as well as in public; the laws are but the formalized expression of part of that influence — are upheld by it, and are vastly exceeded by it, both in extent and rigour. It is not against the tyranny of kings and laws that the reformer needs to strive, so much as against the tyranny of society over itself—of ignorance and assumption over progress and knowledge—of timidity over Faith. And here, also, the vast scope of the subject must ever have prevented any preconceived plan for the regulation of society: no man, however gigantic his intellect, could foresee, comprehend, and calculate all the extent, directions, contingencies, and disturbing influences of mankind's advancement, or what would be necessary for the conduct of the individuals composing it at any one time. Even at this day, principles themselves are undetermined. The manner of regulation, therefore, has been contrived, or has happened to arise *pro re nata*; and, once having become a custom, it has been followed out blindly. Often such custom has been devised by men of inferior capacity; and always, judgment on custom is pronounced by the average run of men—the “common herd.” Always, too, if there is such a thing as advancement, customs must have been established by generations more ignorant than the generations that submit to them; and the older the custom the more thoroughly is that the case. Indeed, it is obvious that there would not be that

inordinate veneration for established usage, if it were not for the fact that there is no machinery for supplying new customs, unless in cases quite exceptional; so that society dreads to give up one law, lest its place should not be supplied. To prevent that mischance, society has in all countries and times resorted to two tricks—it insists on the respect to be paid to any usage merely for its age, and it consecrates some customs against inquiry or handling.

The whole class of customs relating to religion are thus tabooed. Of course the religion dominant in one's own country is "the true religion," and must not be meddled with, under penalty; and therefore we shall not offend; but we are free to see the working of this taboo in other countries. In the regions of Islam we must accept the creed—"Allah il Allah, Mohammed rasool ullah"—"There is no God but God; Mohammed is the prophet of God." You may deny that, under pain of the bowstring, of being stoned, or tortured to death. A book of fiction, mingled with some fact, is delivered to you—the Koran, and you must "believe" it. In vain you say that "belief" is a passive, not a voluntary, state of mind—you must choose to believe, or at least say you believe. You point out physical impossibilities, such as "the Flight;" but the more impossible, the more unquestioning must be your belief. If, indeed, you are not a convert from that faith, but one who can plead a prescriptive right not to believe in the Koran—as being of a Christian race, for

you escape death; but you are degraded in society, disfranchised, disqualified, subject to contumely and injury, without appeal—a “dog of a Christian,” whom any man may kick. Pass to Italy, and you find other dogmas thrust upon you. You must believe in “the real presence.” In vain you plead the evidence of your senses, the absence of proof to back the assertion, the utter want of probability or verisimilitude *à priori*. The more impossible, the more implicitly you must believe. Others, who know as well as you, and doubt as strongly as you, tell you that you must respect the established laws and customs; and you also must yield, or be a martyr. In vain you appeal to the Koran here—that is quite false in Italy, and you would be a “dog of a Turk” for naming it. In England we may laugh at these “absurdities,” neither the mission of Mohammed nor “real presence” forming part of “the true religion” here. So it is all round the world. What is assumed as true in each one country, is denied in all the rest: you may always scoff at the “true” as asserted by all mankind, but the local “true” must not even be discussed. For although, in some “free” countries there is a formal permission to discuss it, you can only do so under pain of being alienated from society.

The excuse for this compulsion of conscience, that man’s reason is, after all, a very poor and finite thing, and that it is presumptuous to limit our faith to what our reason can prove. But, poor as it is,

is the only intelligent guide for *our* acts. Instead of waiting in modest, passive resignation for all the enlightenment that may be vouchsafed to us, restless man—most restless and positive when most ignorant—has added to knowledge a huge heap of things which are assumed; just as early geographers make out a map of their own country, and, aware that that is all they know, but impatient of leaving the rest a blank to be filled up as knowledge advances, have assumed the “ocean stream” around the disc of the earth, or the tortoise that supports the world, and the elephant that supports the tortoise. These presumptuous cosmographers do not perceive that the world is as big as it is, however fragmentary our map; and that the assumed “ocean stream” imagined by man is likely to be little like the rest of the world as it is created. The assumed part of the geography would be a bad guide for the traveller—not quite so informing as Humboldt’s *Kosmos*.

It is, however, such *assumptions* of what is, instead of the search to *learn* what is, with the patience to await knowledge before assertion, that most obstruct improvement. And in proportion as the assumption is consciously baseless, is the heat with which inquiry is prohibited, because inquiry is the more dangerous. The remedy for the inquirer is to ask himself at each stage what things are really felt instinctively—self-evident, or proved; what assumed.

There are similar assumptions in practical morals: without waiting passively to ascertain, by reason or

experience, what things are bad and what good, things have been enjoined or prohibited with little regard to their inherent merits or to consistency of doctrine. Lying and stealing were taught in Sparta—they are prohibited here. But we treat the two offences very differently, and very inconsistently: stealing we punish severely; lying, breach of truth and faith, which is the root of almost all ill-doing, is not a punishable offence: on the contrary, although formally prohibited by the lax code of decorum, it is universally practised; and the man who observes, on all occasions, a literal adherence to truth, is “eccentric,” almost “cracked.” Here is *malum in se* licensed by society. We boast in England that our “morals” in matters of the sexes are the best in the world; yet, somehow or other, our adjustment is such that we have the greatest excess of prostitution; somehow or other, that hideous evil is the result of our arrangements, and we not only let it go on, but boast of those arrangements as the best that can be! In some matters our laws of custom are strangely inconsistent. By an old law a man could not marry his deceased wife’s sister: a statute was passed to authenticate certain marriages with the sisters of particular persons’ deceased wives, but more absolutely prohibiting all other such marriages: such marriages are, *ab initio*, null and void; the progeny are illegitimate, and illegitimacy is the worst opprobrium in this country: yet, strange inconsistency! such marriages are regarded without reproach by a community which

forbids them by its laws, and is peculiarly sensitive to the particular penalty. The reason is, that the marriage is not *malum in se*, but only *malum prohibitum*—not bad in itself, but only a thing created an offence by the law, though not felt to be so by the people; however, as the number of those practically affected by it is small, the inert multitude will not stir in that behalf, but adopts the clumsy expedient of sanctioning a breach of the law which the generation has outgrown, though too indolent to take the trouble of repealing it.

It is impossible for inquiring minds to yield absolute respect to laws involving such gratuitous and sweeping assumptions, such inconsistencies, such conflicting injunctions; and the very conflict attests the fact, that the respect paid to them is not absolute or unquestioning. Disobey them, and you are martyred. What, then, is to be done by the conscientious man? Yield up the right of private judgment, because he will not presume to set himself up against society? Why, that is to yield his social franchise, and to give up also, at least, one of the private soldiers who pioneer the way of advancement—for all inquirers are pioneers. Should he be panic-stricken, and meddle not? He may lose a chance of serving his kind, and must lose his self-respect. Should he boldly deny the law, and court destruction for himself—and thus make his fate a scarecrow to deter others from seeking to further the progress? What, then, should he do? Perhaps an

appeal from the particular country to the whole world may suggest the discreet course. All civilized mankind are pretty well agreed on the most essential truths, so far as they are yet ascertained; but, while mankind at large abstain from compelling the abandonment of national and local dogmas, they keep themselves free from that thrall. Catholic countries alone are subject to this dogma, Mussulman to that; mankind at large remaining free from either, but tolerating both, in the faith that future advancement will teach the particular peoples better. Let the private inquirer adopt that cosmopolitan policy: without yielding his mind to the subjection of special dogmas, let him abstain from outraging the feelings of others, from courting destruction for himself without profit to his cause, but ever keep on the alert to improve the opportunity of asserting a principle which he holds to be true, even to the sacrifice of himself if needful and useful to the cause. In short, let him conduct himself in his own country just as an intelligent foreigner would do—respecting the laws and customs as far so an honest discretion requires, without yielding his mind to thralldom, or giving up the free will which he may use on fit occasion. There is neither deceit, despair, nor rashness there; and in all difficulties a thorough Faith will bear him through unharmed in his heart of hearts.

THE GATES OF SAN GIOVANNI.

BY LORENZO Ghiberti.



LORENZO Cione di Ghiberti was born about the year 1378. His father having died when he was quite young, his mother married a celebrated goldsmith, named Bartolucio, of whom he learned the arts of

drawing and modelling, together with the power of working in metals, for at that time the goldsmiths usually worked their own designs. At the age of nineteen or twenty, Lorenzo had already obtained such proficiency in his art as to be employed by Prince Pandolfo Malatesta in the decoration of his palace, when, hearing it was the intention of the Florentine Government to erect a second gate of bronze to the Baptistery of St. John, he immediately declared himself a candidate; this was in 1401. The first gate had been erected in 1330, by Andrea Pisano, from designs by Giotto.

The terms of the competition were as follow:— Each candidate received, besides his expenses, an allowance for his labour for one year, at the end of which period a design in bronze about two feet square was required to be produced by each artist. Seven designs were executed, four of which were judged not to combine all the requisite qualities; but those by Donatello, Brunelleschi, and Lorenzo Ghiberti, were considered so equal in merit that the judges found it difficult which to choose, when Donatello and Brunelleschi nobly declared Lorenzo's work to be most worthy of the prize. Their generous decision was received with the greatest applause, and immediately confirmed.


Lorenzo commenced his designs in 1402, and it was twenty-two years before the gate was erected; for, though the impatience of the citizens was often expressed, this great artist could not be induced

thereby to slight in any way the due performance of a work upon which he had entered with "infinite love and diligence."

Andrea Pisano's gate contained the life of John the Baptist; Lorenzo carried on the history of the Redemption from the Annunciation to the descent of the Holy Ghost, in twenty compartments, ten on each door; and beneath these the four Evangelists, and the great doctors of the Latin Church, in eight others, the whole being surrounded with a rich border of fruit, flowers, the heads of the prophets, &c. 34,000lbs of metal were used in the formation of this gate.

Some time after the completion of this glorious work, Lorenzo was called upon to produce a third gate, one of the others being to be placed at each side; and he determined to eclipse, if possible, the splendour of either of the former. The present subject was the history of the Old Testament, which he represented in ten compartments, each two and a half feet square, surrounding them with figures of the warriors and prophets, which were themselves encompassed by a beautiful combination of animals, flowers, and fruit, in endless variety. This gate was commenced in 1428, and finished in 1444, as nearly as the dates can be ascertained; and Lorenzo died at the age of 77, in the year 1455.

A complete cast of the central gate, which Michael Angelo declared to be worthy of being the gate of Paradise, was presented within the last few weeks to



the Government School of Design by the King the French. The Royal Academy has long been in possession of a series of casts from it, but, being in separate glass cases, the effect as a whole is entirely lost. Our beautiful group of females is taken from one of the compartments of the right door, representing the "Passage of the River Jordan."



CIRCASSIA AND GEORGIA.



CIRCASSIAN WOMEN.

CIRCASSIA, unless we take some parts of Daghistan, is a cold and barren country compared to the sunny and fruitful Georgia; but still it abundantly supplies the wants of its inhabitants with all the produce of a temperate climate. It is true its surface is principally harsh and rugged, and offers every element of terrible sublimity—the wildest and most awful glens and precipices, in which the avalanche crashes and thunders,

or which resound to the dash of the fiercest torrents. Rank and pestilential marshes also render poisonous the air of the undrained hollows, to which the sun thaws down the snow of the impending hills, and into whose gloomy chasms its rays can never penetrate to dry up the sodden vegetation which absorbs the descending waters. But these same mountains offer also scenes of calm and pastoral beauty, rich meadows, beautifully wooded hills, and mountains cultivated almost to the summit, village rising above village, surrounded by its luxuriant patches of maize, of buckwheat, and of millet. Such are all the north-eastern shores of the Black Sea; the hills swarming with life and animation, even close to the Russian forts upon the shore, and scarcely without the reach of the cannon of the Russian fleet.

These mountains are inhabited by several nations, divided into an infinity of tribes, who evidently do not own a common origin, but who have, apparently, at some time mingled with, and caught some of the features of, the beautiful Cherkessian race, which still remains unalloyed and pure. Notwithstanding this general family likeness, as well as certain points of resemblance in costume, in habits, in the general love of freedom, and in their warlike temper, there exists amongst them a marked distinction of character, of language, and of physical conformation. Irreconcilable enmities array one nation against the other, and bitter feuds divide the tribes of each people within itself.

This is a fact to which the Russians allude with triumph; but it is in the face of these discouraging circumstances that the Caucasian fortress has been maintained for a long series of years against all their efforts; and so great appears to be the growing hate against the Muscovite, that of late the most inimical of the mountaineers have been seen to forget their traditionary quarrels to unite against the common foe; and, if this feeling should become general amongst the hitherto disunited populations, it may readily be imagined what an immense accession of strength it will give to them collectively.



CIRCASSIAN CHIEF.

The principal nations of Circassia are the Cherkesses, the Abasians, the Ossetinians, the Karbaradians, the Tchetchenchis, and the Lesguis; and of these the Cherkesses and the Abasians, the most ancient races inhabiting the north-eastern part of the Caucasian range, are so fierce in their hostility to the Muscovites, so ardent in their execration of them, that they may be considered as utterly irreconcilable and indomitable, except by literal extermination, whilst they may, at the lowest computation, be reckoned to outnumber, by half, all the rest of the united nations of Circassia.

From the difficulty of visiting the Circassians at home—from the impossibility of learning half a dozen different tongues, all radically different, which are spoken amongst them—and from the jealousy and misrepresentation of Russia, no people offering one tithe of the same interest are at the present moment so little known. The calumny of the Russian Government, and of its hireling traveller, has long depicted them to Europe as savage, faithless, and untameable freebooters. Her officers engaged against them in a war to the knife, exaggerating facts, represent them as atrociously cruel, or attribute to their national character a ferocity which, even where it has really been displayed, arises from the very nature of the struggle.

But, amidst the general anathema which is pronounced against them, every detailed and authentic fact, every circumstantial account given even of those

Circassian nations which are looked on as the most ignoble, furnish us with fresh evidence that, uncultivated as head and heart must be amongst this untutored race, the moral superiority of these mountaineers over the Muscovites is as great as that which physically they exhibit.



CIRCASSIAN ARCHER.

The Cherkesses are not tall in stature, but exquisitely proportioned, and possessed of a muscularity and activity which constant exercise has developed

to a wonderful extent. None of the human family so strikingly convey the idea of high breeding, such as we see it in the full blood of the Arab horse, even to the dilating nostril and the gazelle-eye of the high-priced Mijid race, the favourite breed descending from the prophet's steeds.

The costume of these mountaineers is such as to set off the nervous, though delicate symmetry of their make;—a close-fitting frock-coat, with rows of cartridge-pockets sewed upon the breast, and tight trousers. These vestments, which are common to all the Caucasian nations, are generally of some subdued and sober hue: for instance, the colour of the falling leaf. All the magnificence displayed is in the arms and trappings of the steed.

Most of the other Caucasian nations, as well as the Cherkess, in their peaceful equipment, wear a round cap, surrounded by a thick border of sheepskin fur, which gives it a turban-like appearance. This is both black and white; but the fleece of a snow-whiteness usually distinguishes the head-gear of the young and fastidious. The war-dress of the Cherkess, however, in which he is most frequently seen, is remarkable by the addition of his iron helm, surmounted by a spike; the shirt of exquisitely finished mail, falling from the helmet over his shoulders, like the lace of a lady's veil; and the steel armlets, which seem to form part of the forgotten gauntlet—all contribute to give a knightly aspect to the warrior, which his gallantry does not belie.

The Caucasians, besides the excellent blades which they themselves manufacture, have had for centuries the opportunity of gleaning the best all over the East; and, transmitted as heirlooms in families, with the care which they take of them, there appears to be no limit to their duration. A sword or a dagger blade may be worth as much as £100 sterling. This value is not a mere matter of fancy, like that which the Dutchman sets upon his tulip, or the Russian merchant on his fat horse, but it is estimated according to the toughness and the sharpness which the sabre or the dagger can be made to combine, and, if we could manufacture similar arms at Birmingham or at Sheffield, that sum might be immediately obtained for them.

The eastern blade is required to be pliable, and at the same time to bear so keen an edge as to divide a single hair. Now, an English razor, owing its sharpness to the hardness of its temper, will divide the hair; but then it flies like a piece of glass.

The fire-arms of the Caucasians, which consist of rifles and pistols, are as much valued as their edged weapons. The barrels are usually of admirable material, but often indifferently bored, and the locks are always indifferent. They are heavy in the barrel, and often mounted with the matchlock, both of which circumstances contribute to the accuracy with which the mountaineers discharge their contents—the former by preventing the vibration of the piece, the

matchlock by ensuring its steadiness from the absence of all jerk, in producing ignition.

All the Caucasian tribes are dextrous in the use of their weapons, which they practise from their earliest childhood, and the Cherkesses are said to surpass them all. Opposed to a people who are individually (except the Cossacs) utterly unacquainted with their use, their skill has been looked on by them as perfectly marvellous, and accounts the most exaggerated are popular amongst the Russians of the dexterity of their Caucasian foes.

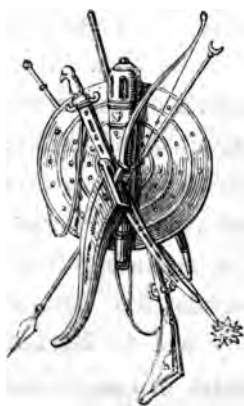
All the luxury which the Circassian displays is in his arms and horses; the hall of a powerful chief is only ornamented by the helmets, weapons, and suits of mail; and on the border lands the steed always stands saddled in the stall. His mode of living is very simple—his food a kind of millet paste called *pasta*, a word borrowed from the Genoese, maize cakes, and the roasted flesh of the sheep, which is made into a pilaf with the above-named grains or rice.

The Circassian women enjoy a considerable share of liberty; but it is customary that the daughter of a *pcheh*, or prince, should only intermarry with the family of a prince; the daughter of an *ouzen* with an *ouzen*; and if she could not find a suitable match, and her charms were sufficiently attractive to content the slave-dealer, it was formerly her greatest ambition to go and seek her fortune in the harems of

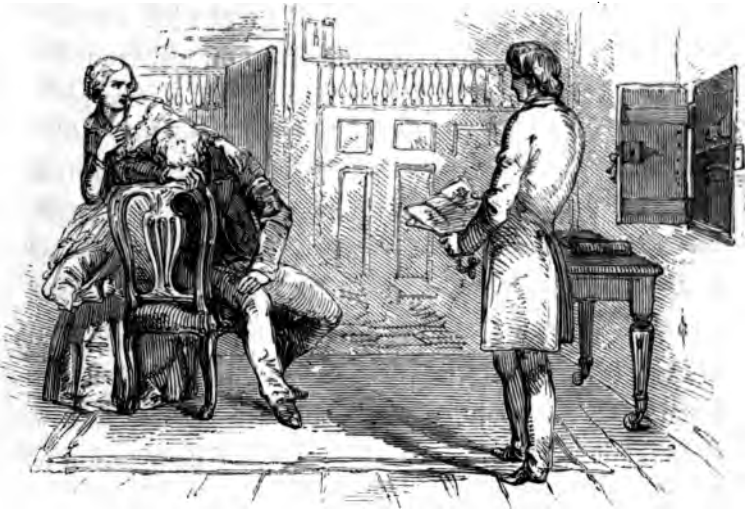
the West, which held out dazzling visions of luxury and splendour, and of amorous sultans and viziers, of whose serai every fair adventuress hoped to become the mistress. It was considered much as the voyage to India on matrimonial speculation on which so many of our British women annually depart, only that the Circassian belles set forth without either Bible, sermons, or Mrs. Somebody's advice to young women proceeding on the oriental husband-chase.

It is also well known that the sale of Circassian women was always managed by the patriarchal head of the family, father or brother, and that the young slave soon learned to be the most anxious to display her attractions to the best advantage to a purchaser; thus differing from England, where there is no go-between in the purchase of women—where, in the ballroom, the mothers instead of the fathers manage the sale, and where the more docile daughters are taught, even before they have left the parental home, to aid their *chaperons* in all their arts to secure the hideous, the imbecile, the deformed, or the profligate, so that they only be the rich. What moral difference is there in the conduct of those who have the avowed resolution of giving up their children, or of the children who are eager to yield up themselves to the first comer, whatever he may be, whose rent-roll will enable him to pay a seducing price—and that of the Cherkess, who sends his daughters to Stamboul, where equally they are to become the property of the first whose wealth will allow him to purchase?

The Circassian nation have no written laws. The Russians, like many of their neighbours, have a whole library containing such, but nine times out of ten these written laws are perverted; but with the Circassians custom supplies their place, and these unwritten customs are inviolate. Nowhere are these more rigidly observed than by the Cherkesses. They are also celebrated for the religious observance of their oath; and although the Zaporavians, or the Tchernomorskie Cossac, and this people entertain towards each other a hate so deadly, that, when some of both sides have fallen in their skirmishes along the line of the Kouban, the Cossacs dare not bury them together, but are at the trouble of digging separate holes, under the apprehension that the bodies would not rest in peace within the same grave. Yet no Tchernomorskie would consider himself in the slightest peril in venturing into the heart of the hostile mountains, if his safety was secured by the word of a Cherkess.



THE STRONG BOX.



HE brought my father home from India, where, in order to obtain his rank as colonel, he had stayed so long that he now evidently laboured under mortal sickness. Having married a poor woman, his father deprived him of all assistance, and cast him off entirely ; so that the rank, with its consequent income, had been a great object, for my father was not one of those who made fortunes in India. However, we hoped much from his native climate. On arriving in England, we heard that my grandfather had died, and a letter was sent to the

heir, his eldest son. It was returned, opened, and enclosed in a cover, inscribed within "From Mark Boteler," in my uncle's own hand. He did not wish to incur the expense of a reconciliation with a brother who had, at least, an equitable claim on a share in the family property. My father was almost a stranger in England, and he wrote to an old friend who had settled as a lawyer at Lynford, in Kent. The answer was from Mr. Lane's son, saying that his father was dead, but strongly inviting my father to come down and visit him. My father was now so ill that all devolved upon my mother and me; and I wrote to young Lane, asking him to hire a house for us in his neighbourhood; for his manner was that of a friend, and we thought it well to secure some kind of companion for the invalid.

We soon set out for Lynford, which we found to be a cheerful country town, Lane's house was just on the outskirts, hidden by well-tarred palings and clustering trees, and pointed out by a neat brass plate on the door in the palings. A ring at the bell brought forth, first a motherly and decent-looking servant, then Lane himself—a very young man, fair, stout, beaming with good nature, and as familiar with us, especially with me and little Ellen, as if he had been our brother. The house which he had taken for us was next to his own; a very small and comfortable cottage.

Lane proved a friend indeed. He was equally a companion to my father and myself, and the adviser of all. Not long after we had settled, my father

received a letter, without date, but bearing the post-mark of Ashdean (near which my uncle Mark lived), and written in a very clownish hand and manner, telling him to look after his own interests, for that Mr. Boteler was very ill—dying, and that he was at the mercy of a woman who had been his cook, but who had persuaded him to marry her, and that she and her son were perfect tyrants to the sick man. My father, in spite of his bad health, set out for Ashdean with me; we reached the place without difficulty, and saw my uncle alone. He was in bed, evidently dying; he condescended to “forgive” my father; but said that all the property would go to the heir; and supposed, with a sneer, that it was a brotherly reconciliation that my father came for, not the money. We made our visit short; and it was a fatal one to us, for the fatigue and chagrin destroyed my father, even before Mr. Mark Boteler was laid among his ancestors.

My father died all the happier at thinking that he left us near so good a protector as Lane. I had grown old enough to incur some blame at not having yet chosen a business; but my father’s health absorbed every other anxiety. Not long after that suspense had ceased, Lane settled that, although so old, it would be best for me to be articted to him; and articted I was accordingly. He undertook every trouble, every expense, every responsibility.

I had been with him some time, when another letter came, in the same hand as the former, addressed to my father; from the context it seemed to be writ-

ten by a discharged servant, who had grievances of his own; but its main object was to tell my father that his brother Mark had repented, and had left him some money—had revoked his will; but that there was some foul play, of which Lawyer Harris could give an explanation. Through Chance, Mereweather, and Bannerman, his London correspondents, Lane made inquiries, the result of which was, that there were some odd proceedings at Applefield, my uncle's place, just about the time of his death; but Mr. Harris was too respectable a man to be the object of suspicion. However, the effect of all these matters was, to give us a strong suspicion that there had been some foul play; the suspicion took complete possession of my mind, and I secretly determined to take some decided step to confirm or remove it. To satisfy me, Lane kept up inquiries, which served indeed to strengthen his own doubts; and thus it was that we heard of Harris's being without a clerk. I determined to apply for the situation, and obtained not only Lane's consent, but by his means, a commendation from several respectable lawyers in London.

Before I left Ashdean, I was agreeably surprised by an event of which, as is often the case in such matters, I had no anticipation. Lane announced to me, with a timidity and deference towards myself that were not the least surprising part of the business, that he was attached to my sister, whom I still thought of as a mere child—for she was even now barely sixteen; what is more, he told me that she had no dislike to

him; and finally, that my mother had accepted him for a son-in-law, only craving a little delay on account of Ellen's youth. But what surprised me most was the discreet self-possession which little Ellen had shown—first in keeping her secret, and then in taking her position as a woman, the affianced bride of a sensible, substantial and respected man like Lane. Woman's tact jumps to these conclusions in the most astonishing way, without teaching or experience. In departing from Lynford I felt that I left behind me but one family, comprising all I cared for in the world. I promised to write through James Edwards, a cockney brother of one of Lane's clerks, John Edwards, whose name I, John Boteler, borrowed for the expedition.

Once more, encountering no trouble or hindrance, I entered the thriving little town of Ashdean, and without much difficulty I found, in the newer part of the place, the new brick house of "Mr. Harris," whose name was on the door; while "Office," on a small brass plate directed me to the bell above it. All was admirably clean and neat in and about the house, showing that not a sixpence had been withheld to set it forth, not a sixpence wasted. A most respectable middle-aged servant-maid opened the door, and then ushered me into the office, which was in fact the front parlour.

It was a good-sized room, but full half of it, next the two windows, was parted off by a high partition with a rail at the top, enclosing a large double desk, which re-divided the enclosure into two, each com-

partment with its separate door : one was evidently the vacant place of the missing clerk ; in the other, on a high stool, sat Mr. Harris ; he glanced at me, motioned for me to sit down, and continued his writing. His appearance put no denial on my suspicions. He was a gentlemanly-looking man, all in black, with white hair trimmed close, and, though not exactly little, was of small proportions, and excessively neat both in build and costume. His face pale, but not unhealthily so, was small and delicate in features, and mild in expression ; but the thin, compressed lips, more compressed as he wrote, gave it a mechanical firmness : it was what you would call a wooden face, and was scarcely redeemed from that unimpressible character by being grave to a degree of severity. When he came to a pause in his writing, he turned round and asked me what he could do for me ; on which I introduced myself, and he hastily shook hands, with a short, dry, bow.

Having come to an understanding as to what I had been used to do, and arranged for salary and so forth, I asked him when I should enter upon my duties ? “ At once,” he said, “ for I have been put to much trouble for want of a clerk.” In five minutes my quill was playing a duet with his on the vacant desk ; and so we continued for some time. In the midst of it the decent maid-servant, whose name I now found to be Elizabeth, came in and said that dinner was ready ; my watch being then exactly at one o’clock. Harris immediately left his desk,

with a look of invitation to me ; and we stepped into the parlour behind the office, where dinner was laid out, with one chair at the table. Harris motioned me to take another, and, in removing the cover of the dish before him, said he hoped that there was enough, for he had forgotten to order more since I had come. I made no doubt of there being enough, and took care not to eat more than one-third of what was on the table ; keeping an eye to Elizabeth's good favour. In a short quarter of an hour we were again at our desks, with scarcely a word exchanged ; and again we worked on till tea-time ; then till nine o'clock, when Harris said that his clerk, who lived in the village, usually went home, and that I might take a walk if I pleased. I said, I should prefer working ; having determined in my own mind never to flinch while Harris stuck to his stool. He said no more, but the shadow of a smile on his face showed that he was not displeased. I found that I had set myself no easy task in undertaking to keep pace with Harris ; who was never from his desk, excepting when he went out on business—and then he always returned in half the time that might have been expected ; or when clients came in, and then his methodical conversation sent them away almost before they knew that they had told him all they had. His manner was always the same—precise, dry, and steadily rapid. He seemed to chase money with his pen along the paper ; but, as we grew more acquainted, his rigidity slightly

relaxed, and in his attention to my smaller comforts he was kindly: for, as a stranger from a distance, I had arranged to live in the house. As to work, he seemed to feel it no evil, and to be unable to conceive that others should prefer anything else to it.



CHAPTER II.



ONE day, while we were at work, a client came in. There had been a sound of horses' feet just before; there was the tread of boots and a jingle of spurs as he came along the passage, and he entered the room with a swaggering stamp, blowing with his lips as he did so. I looked up and saw a tall young man, in a green coat and a kind of sporting dress, brandishing a large hunting-whip in his hand. He was well built, and looked strong; but his face was strangely pale and bloated, such as I had seen in some hard livers. The predominant expression was brutal insolence, which was increased by the trick he had of puffing out his under lip, from time to time, with a blowing sound. The instant Harris caught sight of him, the lawyer stepped forward and led him into the back parlour; and there they talked for a full hour—the young man's voice loud and unceasing, though his rude utterance prevented my distinguishing his words. Harris seemed to speak in his usual placid and low tone. The client was dismissed by the other door of the parlour, without coming again through the office. When Harris re-entered, he looked as precise as ever; but there

was a trace of strong vexation in his countenance. Whenever that client came, Harris took him into the inner room; and there they talked, always in the same manner.

I was not long in discovering what I suspected, that the young man was my cousin, Mark Boteler. He always seemed to be remonstrating with his lawyer, as though he were angrily, or even threateningly, importuning him to do something, which the other refused. I could occasionally catch such phrases as, "Where the devil is the good of boggling at this?" "You and I should not quarrel." "Do this, and I won't ask for anything more," and so forth, intermixed with the most disgusting imprecations, which Mark threw out as the ornaments of his discourse; and, indeed, without them it would probably have been bald enough, for his phrases recurred exactly in the same form over and over again, as though he had few ideas, and fewer words.

My mission seemed to promise success, for I could perceive a growing confidence in my master, and I now felt I was in the thick of the plot. One day a coach stopped at the door; there was a little bustle in the passage; a young lady entered the office, and Harris—never in my life did I feel so astounded as at the unexpected exhibition which I then saw—Harris rushed to the young lady, clasped her in his arms, and hugged her might and main to his bosom; using the most playful and sportive terms of endearment; the which having done for some





moments, he put his arms round her, and took her into the back parlour, where they remained for a short space, while I heard boxes brought in and set down; and the coach drove away. Eventually Harris came back: his face had resumed its wonted precision, his pen worked again like a machine.

At dinner, there were three chairs at the table, at the head of which now sat the young lady, Miss Susan Harris—a comely girl, fair, blooming, and lady-like, all smiles and good humour. But Harris's face was the wonder to me, and I could scarcely keep my eyes off it. The wooden man was now all nods and becks and wreathed smiles, his countenance perpetually in a flutter of delight, and his lips running over with satisfaction. With all his delight, however, the quarter of an hour was not exceeded. He kissed the girl and wished her good-by, as if he were going off on a journey; and then again we were at our desks, driving the quill as usual, for Harris was a clever lawyer and a busy one.

Harris's own ability was fortunate for me, since it enabled him to appreciate the good groundwork in the business which I had derived from Lane; and that, no less than my unflinching diligence, encouraged a rapid extension of his confidence. He now began to send me freely to his clients; and I was always eager to do whatever I could, either to show him my assiduity or to give him ease; for indeed I almost pitied his self-imposed slavery. The respectability of the man, his bland kindness, and now this

show of affection for his daughter, made it impossible for me to help contracting a kind of regard for him, —strangely mixed up with the feeling that I had when I looked upon his wooden face, bent over the paper, and thought how he was the man who had helped to ruin my father, and to keep my mother from her rights.

Another change followed upon Miss Harris's return. She was usually in the back parlour, for the house was small, and that was our only sitting-room. Harris seemed as much to dread her meeting with Mark Boteler as mine; and now, instead of taking my cousin into the private room, he always found some errand for me out of doors as the unpleasant client entered. Each new visit from him served to revive all my suspicions and my dislike to Harris. I observed another coincidence; whereas there was one client whom Harris kept always altogether to himself, there was one place which no one else ever went to. In the wall, near the little gate of the enclosure about his desk, was a large closet, in which a great number of papers were kept: there was another such closet in the back parlour, and round about the office were the usual shelves and tin boxes: to the whole of that domain I was gradually admitted, with one exception—in the office closet was a large strong box let into the wall at the side; and that strong box was never visited by any one but my master. Something wrong was there.

Miss Harris's arrival made other differences to me.

I found her a very agreeable companion in the short intervals of work; and the household was much enlivened by the presence of a gay and kindly girl. Nor was she only gay: I found her, in conversation, well enough for the daughter of a country lawyer, and still more endowed with natural sense than with education. As I increased in the master's confidence, so my discretion helped me in the father's, and also in the young lady's; and after a time I became as one of the family. There was something, although I could not resist the temptation of yielding to it, not altogether satisfactory in this change; for I began to have compunctions, to feel doubts how far my playing the spy was honourable, or even humane. I learned the motive of Harris's fagging at work, and also, perhaps, of his knavery: he was working for his daughter; and Susan herself was at least innocent—innocent, I was sure, of all wrong whatever; and yet I found myself playing the *spy* upon her father; so apt are we, in combating vice, to fall into vices of our own.

It was when Susan left us for a week, to visit some friends, that I felt how much she was missed in the house. But her absence was useful in one way: for we had an extraordinary press of work, and, to enable me to get through great part of it without interruption, Harris stationed me in the back parlour, while we took our meals in the kitchen. There was no longer any occasion, therefore, to send me out should Mark Boteler come, and my hope that he

would do so was not disappointed. The very day after Susan had gone, I heard his swaggering step and loud voice in the office. Now, I had been there just before, and had taken the precaution, with a view to the contingency, of leaving the door ajar, though I banged it slightly as if it were quite closed. There, within my hearing, stood the knavish lawyer who had defrauded our family; there stood the ruffian in whose favour he had done it; and now I should hear, without let or hindrance, the whole of that story which Mark told over and over again, and of which I was accustomed to hear such tantalizing scraps.

I will not repeat the disgusting but tedious conversation. It consisted, on Mark's part, entirely of abusive importunity. I gathered that he had two objects. One was to obtain possession of that "damnation will," which he said belonged to him more than to Harris; for Harris had had the full price of it. He knew that no other lawyer would have had £5000 for the job; only Harris was too sharp for a poor dying fool. However, this demand seemed to be only as a screw to extort compliance with another—that Harris should give up "John Talbot's lease." The will Harris said little about, as if he were sick of the subject; but to give up the lease he flatly and obstinately refused. He asked Mark what he could possibly want it for. "Oh, you need not know; Talbot is an insolent bully, and has been behaving badly to me." Still, Harris said, Talbot was his client, and he felt as much bound to be a faithful

lawyer to the tenant as to the landlord. "You a faithful lawyer!" cried Mark, with a burst of oaths; "remember that cursed will." "At all events," answered Harris, "I was not then engaged on the other side." "Oh!" that's your morals, is it!" And so the conversation went on.

Now, either Harris pretended not to know Mark's motive, or he was not so sharp in matters of gallantry as in law; for although Mr. Boteler refused to say why he wanted the lease, about which there appeared to be some supposed irregularity injurious to Talbot, he could not, in his incontinent speech, conceal the true reason: he had assailed the virtue of Talbot's daughter. The sturdy yeoman had defended his child against his landlord. Mark, as usual, departed in a storm of wrath, and as soon as he had gone I went into the office, that Harris might not discover how I had managed to leave the door ajar.

That same afternoon came Mr. John Talbot—a portly, robust farmer. At first he was all red; but after he had exchanged compliments with Harris he looked ready to faint, and, wiping his forehead, sat silent. "Can I do anything for you, Mr. Talbot?" asked Harris, reluctant to waste time. "My lease?" said the farmer, in a feeble voice. "Your lease!—is there anything amiss?" "No, Mr. Harris, not that I am aware of. Have you got it?" "Oh, yes. Let Mr. Talbot have the lease, Mr. Edwards; there it is in that box, 23, over your head; yes, that one. Give the lease to Mr. Talbot." I did so, and Talbot

looked at it much as a housewife looks at fish which she has bought and suspects to be bad. "Is there any *flaw* in it, Mr. Harris?" said the farmer, in an awe-stricken tone. "It might have been better drawn up, Mr. Talbot; but I think I could defend it." "Ah! you were not my lawyer then, more's the pity." Mr. Boteler said he would have it back from you. "Mr. Boteler," said Harris, "did not leave that lease with me, Mr. Talbot; in this matter I am your lawyer; and it should never leave my hands until it reached yours. Would you like to take it home?" "Oh, not at all, quite the reverse," answered the farmer: "it is safer with you than with me. We all know Lawyer Harris; but I only came to set my heart at ease. Please put it back, Sir," he added, turning to me. I replaced it, and Talbot went away a strong man again.

I profited by the same trick, of leaving the door ajar, two days afterwards; for Mark came again, and I heard still more. He had now a new demand to make, though I soon gathered that it was only the revival of an old idea. It dismayed me more than I should have expected. He mentioned it as if it had just occurred to him, and as a capital way of settling all disputes between him and Harris: he wanted the lawyer to give him "that girl, his daughter," for his wife. "And surely," he said, "Mark Boteler, of Applefield, was worth a lawyer's daughter, any day." Harris hesitating, out came the old story of the will; it was all said and re-said and said again,

almost in the same words, at least five times within the hour; and I am sure that it had been in like manner said in quintuple every time Mark Boteler called. Harris's share in the conversation consisted of placid refusals either to give the daughter or the document. He had, he said, already done enough in that business of the will, and he would do no more; for, if he were to lose his hold over Mr. Boteler, he did not know what mischief so rash a man might do. As to his daughter, he said she was not his property, but his companion; the choice of a husband should be her own, and he did not believe she had any liking for Mr. Boteler: an assertion repeated every time Mark urged his suit, which drew forth a volley of oaths, uttered every time with such singular sameness of expression that I wondered how Mark could remember the words. At length he was got rid of.

On the following Saturday Susan was to come home; and I could see that Harris was rather perplexed at having to fetch her, as he ought to go to Mr. Hammersley, a rich client, whose seat was about twelve miles from Ashdean, and who had sent, at short notice, to ask Harris to come over to him that very evening. Under such circumstances, I ventured to offer to take his place in the gig, which he had borrowed, to fetch his daughter. He seemed delighted at the offer, and had evidently abstained from asking me only because it was not exactly within the province of a clerk—an etiquette in which I found him very punctilious. Anything like mistrust

at sending so very decorous and discreet a young man as I had proved myself to be, seemed never to have entered his head. Accordingly, I took the gig, and set out on the errand late in the afternoon, with a feeling of delight which I did not attempt to criticise. Susan was surprised to see me instead of her father, but I did not observe that she look displeased. It was late when we returned, but the night was moonlight and beautifully quiet. The conversation flowed easily; and when I went to bed it was with a feeling that I had been admitted more intimately than ever into the family, and that I was even a greater rascal than I supposed in becoming a spy.

One evening, when we rose from tea, Susan said something to her father, which I did not hear, about his never ceasing to work. "Well, my child," he answered, "it is all for your sake. I am sure I have done many things for your sake that I would never do for anybody else's. You will be all the better for it, Susan, by-and-by." Susan declared that he had already enough for them both, and that she would much rather he would begin to take some rest. Harris laughed, and said, he suspected that she was not thinking so much of him as of some one else; and then, turning to me, he said, "Perhaps she is right, Edwards. I think it would be decidedly better for you to rest; so I shall leave you a prisoner, as hostage for me;" and he went out of the room.

It is curious to see how sensible men, who have

seen the world, make these little blunders. Harris never dreamed that he had said too much, even to so discreet a clerk; but when I glanced at Susan, I saw that she did so. I felt rather awkward, and there was a silence; which I broke by saying something about my inability to thank her for being so considerate; which was indeed carrying on Harris's blunder. She suddenly rose up from her chair, and looked out of window. She did that so abruptly, that a sudden fear seized me that I had made the stupidest of all blunders, and had presumed a motive and interest which did not exist. I therefore followed her, and said, "I hope, Miss Harris, that your father has not led me into giving you offence, by supposing that—by thanking you where it was a presumption to suppose thanks due." She neither turned her head nor answered, and my fears began to master my discretion very rapidly. I believe my voice must have been altered when I said, "I am afraid, from your silence, that it is so?" She now turned quickly round,—never, I thought, had I guessed how lovely she really was,—and she said, "It is I who ought to apologise for—for seeming so strange, but"—She burst into tears, and crossed the room to leave it. At the door she stopped, and I took her hand. "My father," she added, in a low voice, "did not make any mistake." And she went away. Now, here I had fallen into a further trap: having come merely to recover my own property, and to obtain my rights as an honourable man, I had already

made considerable progress in stealing my master's daughter. I felt very much perplexed, and very much ashamed; but I had gone too far now, to go back either way; and I went on shutting my eyes to the future.

Towards Harris's secret I made considerable way. With the increase of his confidence I was able to see more. As usual, whenever Mark had been with him, he went to the closet which I was never suffered to visit; and, as he was more indifferent to my presence than he used to be, I was able to observe that in that closet he used always to open a particular little japanned box, which he placed in a corner of the strong box. From seeing it three or four times I got to know it by sight, and felt no doubt of what it contained. Like a man with an unpleasant secret on his mind, Harris went to it instinctively, when it had been talked about by Mark, to see that it was safe. I now only watched for an opportunity of being fully admitted to the closet, and ascertaining that the document was what I assumed it to be, before I brought upon the crafty lawyer the full exposure.

The "exposure," however, was not to happen without some other things intervening. One day, when I returned to the office from a client's house, I heard a strange confusion in the back room. Harris was not in the office, and, from the perfect stillness down stairs, I supposed Elizabeth to have gone out. In the back room I could hear Mark's

voice loud enough to understand what he said, if he had not spoken with that coarse blubber-lipped indistinctness, and that half-drunken slackness, that made his speech not very clear, even when there was no door between you and him. Mark seemed to be walking about the room. Supposing that Harris was in talk with him, I paid no great attention for a minute or two; but presently I was astonished by hearing Susan's voice, followed by another burst from her visitor; then Susan's voice again. She seemed in trouble. I ventured to open the door and look in. On seeing me she cried, "Oh! Mr. Edwards, I am so glad you are come!" and she at once moved towards me. I had no difficulty in understanding what had passed; my respectable cousin Mark had forced himself upon her with the declaration that Harris would not make for him; and, being very awkward and shamefaced, he had spurred his courage to make up for those deficiencies by bullying, mingling his profession of attachment with oaths and such asseverations, not to mention some abuse of the young lady for slighting him. Susan seemed to have been sitting under a kind of fascination and despair, conscious that she was left alone in the house, and quite uncertain what the ruffian might do next." When he saw me, the bully seemed almost glad of a proper object for his excited anger. "What business have you here, my man?" he cried. "Get out of the room, or I will kick you out." Without answering him, I turned to Susan, and asked her if

Mr. Boteler was there with her good will? "Oh, no, indeed," she answered; on which I requested the young gentleman to step with me into the office. "I should like to see myself talking with a d——d clerk," he said; and he laid hold of my shoulders to force me back through the door. I was not slow to seize him. His grasp was firm, and he had somewhat the start of me; and I felt that it was as much as I could do to hold my ground. I could hear Susan panting with suppressed terror. Of course defeat in such a presence would have been terrible, and I did my best; but I could feel every fibre in my frame strained to its utmost; and yet I yielded, Mark gradually forcing me back. Suddenly his grasp grew tighter, clenching my arms like a vice; but at the same time he staggered and tottered: I looked at his face—it grew black and purple: I could feel his fingers gathering up to themselves—his breath was short and convulsive—and as I forced myself from his grasp he fell heavily back upon the floor. The drunken brute was in a fit. Susan was dreadfully alarmed; but we managed to undo his collar, and soon afterwards, Harris and Elizabeth coming in, Susan was sent off to her own room, while Mr. Monck was summoned.

The fit passed off; but Mark still seemed in a state of torpor, and, with Mr. Monck's concurrence, it was determined that Harris and I should take him home in a coach, which we did accordingly; and we left him in bed under the care of the doctor.

Harris and I returned home in the coach, and on the way he made me relate how it had all happened. He took my hand, and shook it in a very affectionate manner, as if I had really done something in the way of rescuing his daughter; for I never saw a man more shocked and horrified than he was at the idea of Mark's having spoken to Susan without check or witness; and I could partly guess his reasons for that. He was very much agitated, and, while he shook my hand again, he said, "My dear Edwards, never commit a bad action, for I can tell you that it destroys a man's happiness. I have done one thing in my life which I am very sorry for, and you see it has put me in the power of this miserable young man. I have often thought that I would settle it all, freely and frankly; but I have never been able to muster the courage to do it in *that* way. And now what to do I do not know; for you see we are always exposed to this kind of attack." There was more in his manner than in his words, in saying this, as if he were penitent at the past, and dismayed at the future. I felt for him much. Taking his hand, I assured him that, while I was with him, the house should never need a protector; and that, whenever he liked to keep me at home, I should be very willing to stay as a watch. "You are very good—very good, indeed, Edwards," he answered; "and I assure you that I feel great relief in thinking how much you are at home, on account of this Mr. Boteler."

No more passed then; but when we got home we found Elizabeth in great trouble, as her young mistress was very ill. Harris hastened up to his daughter's room, while I remained below, in no very comfortable state of mind. Presently he returned, and said that Susan was better, and that he supposed it was nothing but alarm; but he had sent for Mr. Monck, to come as soon as he should return. Her illness, indeed, was merely transient, but I did not see her any more that night; and I went to bed to ponder in the usual way on the inconsistencies of my position, being now the pledged protector of the villain Harris, and almost the acknowledged guardian of his daughter.

When I saw Susan next morning, and shook hands, I could feel my hand pressed with a fervour which she did not think of concealing, and there was a grave expression of what I cannot call anything but affection in her face which went to my heart. Still I was sufficiently master of myself to keep my enterprise in view, though I had already determined very much to modify the "exposure" with which I had meant to visit Harris for his villany.

The long-looked for day at length came. We were at tea in the back room, when Harris missed a paper that he expected to find in his pocket. It was one of great importance, and he was rather alarmed. He had been walking a great deal during the day, and was very tired; and, without asking him, I went to search about the office in all places

where the paper was likely to be; but I could not find it. At last Susan suggested that he might have put it away and forgotten it. He did not think so, "but perhaps I might as well look," he said; and he added, "if it is anywhere, it is in the strong box," holding out the key. My hand trembled as I took it. I went into the office, contriving half to close the door as I did so. I opened the closet, then the strong box; and there, in a corner of it, lay the little japanned box which enclosed my right—the right of my mother—the right for want of which my father had died. I looked at it for a moment, as it lay perfectly still, regarding it almost as a conscious creature—it seemed to mean so much. Altogether forgetting the lost paper, I seized the box—I opened it. There was one parchment within—it was my uncle's will, disinheriting his son, or rather declaring him to be illegitimate, with some further declaration of his ingratitude, and leaving all his property, as well as the estates, to my father—therefore, to me. I saw it all at a glance; but still I gazed upon the paper. The moments flew. There was a dead silence in the office, and in the other room. Harris called out in a familiar tone that struck strangely on the ear, "Have you found it, Edwards?" I could not answer. The question was repeated, and then followed, "What are you doing?" Still I was silent, absorbed in looking at the parchment, and bewildered how to act. Harris moved—he hastily entered the office—looked into the closet—at the open box

—at the parchment in my hand; and then he began, in a stern voice, “What is this you are doing? By what right have you dared——” “Mr. Harris,” I answered, “I will deceive you no longer,—my name is John Boteler.” He looked like one struck by lightning:—staggering to a chair, he threw himself on to it, and leaning his arms upon the back, he buried his face in them; and so he sat, trembling fearfully. Ruin and disgrace had come upon the respectable lawyer in the midst of his good fame and prosperity. I myself was shocked at the desolation I had hurled upon him. I was more shocked when Susan, alarmed at what she heard, came to the door of the parlour, and looked at her father and me in terrified amazement. She went up to him and laid her hand upon his shoulder, and again her face was turned to me, as though she were afraid of me, and would defend him. I could not stand that look. I already felt more than ashamed of myself. “Susan,” I said, using that name for the first time, “do not look at me so—I cannot bear it. This has gone too far and I did not know what I was about when I began it. Mr. Harris,” I continued, gaining a steadier voice, “you have nothing to fear from me: you now know that I understood better than you thought, what you said to me, the other night, in the coach. I did mean to expose the one bad action of which you spoke; but I am not at all sure that I have not committed bad actions myself in the attempt. At all events you shall suffer no-

thing at my hands. You have been very kind to me, and I would sooner go on for ever as I have done, than profit by your downfall. One bad witness against you, at all events, shall be put out of the way." And so, scarcely thinking what I did, I put the parchment which I held on the fire, and I stood watching as it was destroyed, in that kind of stupor which seizes us after moments of sharp emotion, when the future is all doubt.

I felt my hand taken, and pressed to a pair of warm trembling lips: I looked round,—it was Susan kneeling. "Susan!" I exclaimed in astonished deprecation; and I raised her in my arms. She buried her face in my neck, nestling close to me, with little short sobs. Presently I could feel by her weight that she had fainted, and I called out to her still motionless father—"Mr. Harris! our Susan is ill!" He was up in an instant, and then I saw that his face was white and his eyes were red, and his whole countenance showed that he had gone through a paroxysm of grief. However, without saying any more then, we placed Susan on the sofa in the back parlour, and summoned Elizabeth to take charge of her.

As soon as I knew that she had recovered, anxious for a little relief, I walked out and took a turn beyond the bounds of the village. I was coming home, when I heard, very little noting it, the sound of a horse in violent motion behind me, with a shouting. Conway, the butcher, who had a per-

sonal as well as a professional regard for all in Harris's household, called out to me, with some concern, "You had better get out of the way, Sir." I looked round, and saw Mark on horseback, galloping towards me. He seemed bent at once upon striking me with the butt end of a large whip that he usually brandished, and upon riding me down; at the same time shouting forth horrible imprecations and terms of abuse. For an instant I stood still in sheer amazement; but I was about to step aside, when his aspect changed—both his arms were flourished violently in the air—then, as they dropped he fell forwards upon his horse's neck, and so tumbled heavily from his saddle to the ground. Conway and many others, immediately ran up to help him, and in a few seconds he was lying upon a sofa in Mr. Monck's surgery. He seemed to be dead or dying. I sent a messenger to fetch Harris, as the most proper person I could think of, to look after his client's mortal affairs. The lawyer came without delay—looking in some alarm. I took his hand, eagerly, in both mine, and shaking it cordially, to re-assure him, I said, "My dear friend, I have no time to say anything now, except that I am afraid the miserable Mark is dying; and I would not leave him to expire among utter strangers." Returning my grasp, Harris went towards the group, around the dead man—for such Mr. Monck now pronounced him to be—while I went, at the father's request, to re-assure Susan; lest, hearing of the hasty sum-

mons, she should suspect some mischance. I saw from her manner, that she had not even known of her father's having been sent for; but that she was thinking only of what had passed before I went out. I was not long in explaining to her all that perplexed her—in re-assuring her on the subject of my respect and regard for her father, and in directing her looks to the future.

The death of Mark removed all difficulty from the case; for, without any "exposure" of Harris's share in the matter—and I was now only anxious to hush it up—I succeeded Mark as heir to the estate, of which Susan became, in due time, the mistress; Lane and Ellen, the visitors; while my mother, henceforward, divided her time between Lynford and Applefield. She would have forgiven anybody, at all times, but Susan soon made her love Harris like a relation; and as for him, his heart seemed to expand, and take us all in: for his every thought became devoted to doing all he could to please and serve us all—especially my mother, whom he treated with the most affectionate respect.

METOPES OF THE PARTHENON.



THE term metope is derived from the Greek *μετοπη*; *μετα*, with, near, or by, and *οπη*, an aperture or hollow; and is applied in architecture to the space between the triglyphs, or ornamented portions of the frieze in the Doric order, alternating at equal spaces. In the Parthenon these spaces were filled with sculp-

ture, and the term is now usually applied to those compositions.

The metopes were originally ninety-two in number, fourteen on each front, and thirty-two on each side. Those in the east front appear to have referred to the actions of Minerva, and the chief Athenian heroes, the designs being still discernible, though all were so much mutilated that none were removed by Lord Elgin. In the west front the subjects were alternately a horseman with a prostrate pedestrian, and two combatants on foot, supposed to refer to the battle of Marathon.

The subjects on the south side towards each end refer to the contest between the Athenians and Centaurs. The nine central ones represent miscellaneous subjects.

Twenty on the north side were destroyed during the siege by the Venetians, by an explosion, the Parthenon being then used as a powder magazine. Two are quite obliterated, and, of the ten others, one only, that at the western angle, is well preserved. It contains two draped female figures, one seated on a rock, the other standing before her, with her left arm extended, over which is thrown a large veil, which floats gracefully behind her, and is gently drawn to the right side: the right arm has perished, and, unfortunately, both heads are wanting.

Sixteen metopes are in the British Museum, all of which are original except No. 9, that being a cast from the original in the possession of the French Government.

Casts from three metopes, including the one above described (from which our engraving is taken together with some additional portions of the frieze a most beautiful female head, and various architectural details, have lately been received from Athens where they have been moulded for the King of the French. Some of these may now be seen in the Elgin saloon.

The metopes being placed in the open light, are all executed in very high relief, in order to obtain sufficient breadth of shadow to render them conspicuous and intelligible at the points from whence they were to be viewed. The actions of the figures were also so arranged as to prevent any cross shadows from the figures themselves, thus preserving the light as unbroken as possible upon the surface of the group.

It is said to be under consideration whether a triglyph may not be placed between each metope, so as to attempt the partial realization of their effect, as originally placed; but it is much to be doubted whether this plan will be advisable, for, if they are left at their present altitude, the architectural portions will preponderate, so as to render the whole heavy and cumbrous, whereas, if raised, the details of the groups will be lost, and this ought, certainly, to be considered of far greater consequence than an attempt to produce an effect which must still be very imperfect, and for which so much must be sacrificed.

A SHIPWRECK.



ON the 26th of November, late in the day, a solitary vessel was discovered off ———, on the coast of Sussex, whose broad, round, and elevated bows and stern bespoke her plainly to be Dutch. She was loitering on the waters, as these Dutch vessels are apt to do, while her general movements and conduct, in relation to the shore under her lee, the state of the tide, and the coming night, indicated the doubts and embarrassments of a stranger. She was an object of deep interest to a little group of fishermen, assembled at their ordinary evening council at the capstan, and the opinion among them was, that evil awaited her. The appearances of the weather were fearful: the sky was foul with vapour, and the sun, low in the west, stood staring through the mist with a pale, rayless, and portentous face, that told of approaching danger and disaster. There was little wind, but the sea roared loudly, and came rolling in with an agitated swell, which, old John Read remarked, denoted that the gale was already up to windward, and would be upon us. He was right; before dark it blew, and the last time the stranger-ship was seen

land afloat, she was bending down to her beam-end under a press of sail, doing her utmost to gain an offing, and weather Beachy Head. It was not to be. At ten o'clock, and at about high-water, the wind blowing dismally, and a monstrous sea on, she came ashore, running nearly close up under the lofty chalk cliffs, half a mile east of ———. The crew were speedily relieved from all apprehensions about their safety, by the retiring of the tide, when all hands on board combined with all ——— in the anxious labour of saving what they could of the cargo, before the coming on of the next flood. The vessel proved to be *De Jonge Nicolaas*, of two hundred tons burthen, laden with wine and brandy from *Cette*, and bound to Amsterdam.

Dutch ships bear a reasonable resemblance to Dutchmen, and are to the ships of most other nations, what dull, plodding, steady men are to men of genius and quick passions. They sail slowly and heavily, but they are safe sea-boats, and derive many and great advantages, in the various vicissitudes of a voyage, from the peculiarities of mould and construction, which will not allow them to be swift and lively. As they draw very little water, they drift away broadside to leeward when sailing near the wind; and for their head-way, their bows are about as well formed for cutting through the water as their broadsides. Thus appointed, the Dutchman, in a fleet of all flags, will inevitably bring up the rear: but he bears this distinction in a spirit of quietism that keeps his ship

quite in countenance ; and replies to your ridicule by letting you know that he can walk his fore-castle and quarter-deck in a gale with dry shoes, while you shall be plunging your fine front-bowsprit under—or can make a small harbour, or ground on the main and step ashore, while you must keep the sea, or strike in deep water and be drowned. To fit your ships rather for encountering the shore than the sea, is not in the highest spirit of enterprise ; but we must remember, that if, under such a system of prudential preparation, Columbus had not discovered America, Perouse, perhaps, had not been lost. The difference, after all, is only as between dispatch and delay. The Dutch do all, or are in a course of doing all, that other nations do ; and as nothing is denied to perseverance, they will, before doomsday, do all that is to be done. It is not their way to push themselves forwards into the foremost ranks, as discoverers and inventors ; yet they are not idle ; they are always following, and, only let them choose their own century, they will not always be behind. If they are to act extempore, you must at least give them time.

I went forth at daylight to see the unfortunate Nicolaas, and was just in time to witness her last battle with sea and storm, and her final overthrow. I have often thought that a gibbet on the beach at ——— would make it, as a picture of desolation, quite complete. An effect of as much force, perhaps, was supplied by the masts and tattered rigging of the wreck, which were just distinguishable through the

mist of the surf, and, combining with the natural bleakness and dreariness of the place, gave a depth of meaning to the gloom of a black November morning, which went at once to the heart. The gale had abated considerably, but it had left its signs. Vast, lowering, bloated clouds, full of wrath and mischief, darkened the sky; and the sea, swollen by a spring-flood, was bordered to the distance of half a mile from the shore with tiers of hurrying, foaming, crashing breakers, on the verge of which the devoted ship stood, like a criminal before his executioners. She had as yet suffered no material damage visibly, and looked altogether so sound and compact, that there were some hopes and more fears that she might live through the battery of another flood, and, if more moderate weather should succeed before night, be got afloat again, and even (who could tell?) show her old hull in Amsterdam once more. An unprejudiced spectator, however, could scarcely observe the character and action of the sea that was rapidly advancing, and calculate upon any other result than her destruction.

A great concourse of people from the neighbouring villages and farms had been brought to the spot by tidings of the accident; shopkeepers great and small; artisans high and low; farmers, ploughmen, shepherds, and fishermen—everybody, and his wife and children too—all of whom conceived that they had, at least, a contingent interest in the vessel and her rich contents. No one could possibly stay at home on so

tempting an occasion. Withered and forgotten old women, not seen abroad twice in a twelvemonth, emerged into life, and were out in the world again; mothers with infants in their arms and large families clinging to their aprons—veteran paupers from the poor-house, stumping about on sticks and crutches—all found time, and strength, and resolution enough, to join in the crowd on this great day of invitation. The inhabitants of the coast look upon a wreck as a largess of the elements, which it would be almost a sin not to receive with grateful alacrity. They sally out to enjoy the good things provided for them by such a visitation, with precisely the same sense of general right and welcome as they might do were it to please the skies to rain bread and cheese and beer.

I followed the various throng up to the top of the cliff—a smooth-shaven, perpendicular precipice, from whence we had a clear view of the vessel, lying at the depth of a hundred and fifty feet beneath us, and heard, or thought we heard, the cracking of her planks and timbers, and could note the effect of every wave that burst over her, through the whole progress of her ruin. How magnified in our apprehension was the mightiness of the ocean by the interposition of this victim, which it was destroying before our eyes! As the heavy beetling seas came roaring on to the attack, they seemed in our fancies to be raging with a savage joy, like monsters over their prey. It was like looking upon wild beasts at feeding-time. I could not help

feeling, as the vessel from time to time showed her shattered deck through the parting foam, a sort of pity and sympathy for her, as though she had been not a thing of wood and iron only, but of life and sensation ; and the same sentiment was obviously shared by the crowd about me—a momentary mercy—a “natural tear”—prevailing over the selfishness of their final hopes and wishes. It was not the loss of property that anybody felt or cared for : it was the ship—the Nicolaas—that we deplored, the friend and companion of man, his home and helpmate through many a day of danger and distress, now cast forth to perish without a hand to aid her. “Poor thing !” said a woman near me ; “Lord help her !” drawled out another. There were four or five strangers present, heavy, ruddy, fat-faced men, bulkily clothed in Flushing jackets and trowsers, who were remarkable among the anxious crowd as preserving countenances, untouched by the lightest sign of curiosity or disturbance. Sleep might have closed their eyes, but could scarcely have added to the calmness and repose of their looks. These were Dutchmen, the crew of the vessel—and what was it all to them ? They had their pipes ; and if they smoked on the top of a cliff in Sussex, on board the Nicolaas, or on the borders of one of their own dikes—where was the mighty difference ?

After the vessel had been exposed for about half an hour to the full range of the sea, her masts loosened from the bottom, and carrying all before them, descended slowly and with a crashing noise

to the water. This was a fatal signal: the next sea completed her destruction at a blow; it struck her, and she disappeared, scattered into fragments, like a cask with the hoops knocked off; no vestige of her whole bulk being again visible, except now and then a timber-head sticking up like a black post in the hollow of a sea. At this final act of the catastrophe I looked up wistfully into the face of one of the Dutchmen, shook my head, and so, in my best Dutch, told him how sincerely I condoled with him. He evidently understood me, for he took his pipe out of his mouth—ejected a cataract of saliva over his shoulder—shook out the ashes—rammed down the remaining charge with a tawny, broken-nailed thumb—replaced the pipe between his teeth—blew out a cloud of smoke with three or four sharp sudden puffs—found all right—and thereupon looked, not as if the Nicolaas was not, but as if she had never been. I quite hated the fellow for his barbarous resignation. He and his shipmates with mute sobriety now returned to the town, where they at once seemed as used to the place and as little moved and wondering as the posts. These are your men for troublesome times: a revolution that moved them would move the hills; an earthquake, nothing less, could put them out of their way.

On the ebbing of the tide, there was “a rush,” as at the opening of the doors at the theatre, for good places or prizes under the cliffs, and we immediately found ourselves amidst the ruinous litter of the wreck. No one asked now—where is she? She was every-

where. I never saw a vessel in so short a time so completely broken up. To the extent of a mile and a half the beach directly under the cliff was strewed, without the clear space of a yard, with her fragments and her cargo. A person not familiar with such sights would have supposed that here were materials for a dozen ships; and the pipes of wine, three hundred in number, lying in clusters of four and five, as far as the eye could see them along the beach, seemed cargo enough to have filled them. A little wreck, as they say of a little blood, makes a great show, and in a state of dispersion gives a very deceitful account to the eye of its actual quantity.

As there were no lives to be lost or saved, it may be imagined, that, as a spectacle the mere rubbish of broken beams and timbers must have been dull and insignificant. But this was by no means the case. A wreck, as a sign only of the power and danger of the sea, is always an impressive sight, and though the crew may have been Dutchmen, is full of associations connected with human interests, which will not allow us to look upon it without emotion. The ruins of a house destroyed by fire, are always an object of earnest curiosity; we gaze anxiously amongst the blackened ruins upon every trace of our old acquaintance; rooms, and their furniture, a stove and a poker, a bit of papered wall or any such familiar images of domestic comfort and security, become full of a deep and melancholy interest. It is the same with a wreck: every poor cast-away plank has its story—every remnant of a

deck and cabin something to say in its desolation, that may stop a man for a moment to think and sigh. I observed the cook's huge black boiler, full of sand, pebbles, and sea-weed, lying in dismal companionship with the vessel's figure-head, a goggle-eyed gentleman with flowing looks and a three-cornered hat, radiant all over with green and gold. Ah! what did all this coxcombry avail him now? Pieces of rope and ragged canvas, bedding, coats, boxes, lay jumbled together, with the splintered fragments of the ship, amongst the beach and weeds; a blanket stuck upon the jagged points of a broken mast—here and there was a *drowned* hat and a shoe, not to forget a pair of blue breeches of the true Batavian mould, pasted out in full dimensions against the white face of a chalk rock—a striking example of the mixed ludicrous and pathetic.

I had wandered about for an hour, keeping at a distance from the people and their noise, that I might enjoy, if I may say so, the natural circumstances of the scene without disturbance, and was on my return, when I met a man lustily singing out a jovial song, tumbling about and snapping his fingers with an emphasis that clearly showed that he cared not a fig for the world. Such manners produced in me an unpleasant revulsion of feeling, for they certainly were not in harmony with dreadful precipices, the awful voice of the sea, and the mournful memorials of its fury that lay in my path. Ay (said I to myself), this rascal has been moralising for his part

over the contents of one of the wine casks, having eluded, no doubt, the vigilance of the guards. Presently I met another exactly in the same plight, and "a third, whose air was like the former;" till, on rounding a projecting point of rock, I had the whole company again before me—all revolutionised since I had last seen them, and brought by the same means to the same likeness. The devil could not have added a more artful bait to the ordinary temptations of a wreck than this provoking cargo. It was irresistible; flesh and blood, in Sussex at least, literally could not stand against it. I never saw drunkenness on such a scale, or in such variety before. One had seen at a fair considerable numbers very fully drunk, but still they were the exceptions—the minority, and served rather, like the red flowers in a corn-field, to diversify the crowd, than to mark its general character and condition. Here, on the contrary, in a multitude of four or five hundred people the sober man was the rarity, and so much so, that, like one bonnet in the "pit," he was quite lost in the reeling tumult by which he was surrounded. The whole history of getting drunk was here exhibited at one point of time; from the earliest symptoms of innovation, up all the steps to the very top of the ascending flight—and then down again on the other side, lower and lower, even to the bottom—the level "dead drunk." The chattering, the laughing, the singing, the bawling, the jiggling, the quarrelling, the challenging, the fighting, the staring, the silent, the sulky, the sentimental, the rolling, the fall-

ing, the fallen—were all confounded together, and composed certainly as wild a set of figures for a picture of the sea-beach at noon-day, as the most riotous imagination could desire.

You might go through all Cook's Voyages, I fancy, and not find for it a worthy companion-piece. The women confined themselves principally to dancing and singing, clamorously beset by a host of squalling children—drunk too, poor little sufferers; the boys, of all sizes, were kicking one another's hats into the sea, pulling off the women's caps, huzzaing at a fight, or shouting and laughing at some methodistical old beldame, who would be preaching in her cups; while the men, every one who was not absolutely *felo de se*, and quiet at his length, were at work—or enacting every extravagance of Bedlamites, as they played at rolling casks into carts. And were there no superintendents to check such doings? Oh! yes—fifty, if there was one; but, somehow or other, these men of authority were, of all the persons on their legs, the most helplessly drunk; having arms in their hands, it appeared to me, for no other purpose, but that they might themselves drink without stint or question. At the top of every loaded cart that moved away, you beheld one of these "safe conducts," an officer they called him, *lolloping* about with a drawn sword, and a face of solemn incompetency, his whole surviving powers being insufficient for the maintenance of his seat, let alone his dignity, for any two minutes of his journey. We had half-a-dozen dra-

goons, too, galloping along the beach, and slashing the air with their sabres, and rolling about in their saddles, with a freedom that must have ended in twenty tumbles, had they been anything less than drunk—and dragoons. There were still higher powers, even gaugers and supervisors, who had been equally open to the seductions of the “rosy god.” The rabble had accomplished their sly potations in holes and corners, with a bladder, a hat, or a shoe, for a goblet ; but, with the magistracy, all was done openly and becomingly—such are the advantages of authority.

In the course of my ramble, I joined a little group who had assembled around a mighty cask, and taken it into their heads that it was necessary they should pronounce upon the nature of its contents. A large can, holding some quarts, by way of sample, was filled and handed over to the chief man, already much disguised, though capable of much more. He collected himself, as a collector should, on receiving the rich measure, swallowed a mouthful, and continued for a minute deliberately smacking his lips, with his head declined a little, and his eyes fixed in a profound, calculating, judicial stare ; then another mouthful, with smacking as before, and another, and another—till, tired of this dribbling and doubting, he determined to have a fair taste at once ; and, with the help of both hands, began gulping down a horse-like draught, which lasted as long as his breath, when the can, splashing and swashing, was redeemed from his unsteady grasp,

and with a crapulous hiccup, he announced that it was—"Port, de—de—decidedly port." The can was then filled and emptied again and again, as it performed its rounds among the whole jury of inquirers, who came to the same verdict, that it could be nothing but port, and all "for the benefit of the underwriters."

There was one cask at a considerable distance from the rest, which I found under the special charge of a sailor belonging to the Preventive Service, who, remote from the general tumult, was abiding here "in single blessedness," about as happy and helpless as it is in the power of wine to make a man. Not knowing with what command I might be commissioned, he thought it necessary, on seeing me, to put on a grave, superintending face; and as he stood *minueting* before the cask, with a cutlass in his hand, and the brass knob of a huge pistol staring out from his breast, he formed altogether the most ludicrously contradictory figure I ever beheld. "What cheer, mate, what cheer?" said I: "All's well," said he; and immediately fell flat upon his back. Now, thought I, he must certainly acknowledge his delinquency; but no: after much uncalled-for plunging and sprawling, for which he damned himself soundly, he contrived to bring himself to a perpendicular again, and, to my amazement, fixed upon me the same official, responsible face, as before, which would have me to know that he was as sober as a judge. I could resist the appeal no longer, but burst out into

a loud laugh, in which the poor fellow at last very cordially joined me; though the approach of his commanding-officer soon spoiled the joke, and I left him to authenticate his temperance with what success he might.

There were two hundred casks of wine, as they called it, saved, and of these, it was in due time discovered, there was not a single one which had not been tapped and *tasted*. It was three days before the whole cargo was deposited in a storehouse; and though, after the first day, it was protected against any general violence, there were still such opportunities of indulgence through the milkiness, or *wininess* rather, of the sentinels, that not a man in the town was quite himself, as long as there was a cask left. They began early; there is nothing like it. I met many most despotically drunk before sun-rise; which, indeed, is not to be wondered at, when we consider that they had been drinking all night. Cold, sour, turbid wine, drank out of a rusty tin can, in the open air, at seven o'clock, on a wet morning, in November! How I envy them their stomachs! Some bruised heads, and a few broken legs, were among the results of this Bacchanalian jollity; and black eyes, fist-made, are to this hour still traceable in their last livery of blue and yellow.

It had occurred to me on the first day of the revels, as I looked upon so many senseless carcasses, lying like corpses on the strand, that darkness and the flowing tide might bring some of them into peril,

from which they were little in a condition to escape; and had it not been for the exertions of sisters almost sober, and wives only half-drunk, it might have proved a sad day for —— indeed. As it was, only one fatal accident occurred.

A dragoon, a fine young man, with his horse, was found drowned on the following morning, by some mischance or misconduct which nobody could explain. He was observed late in the night quite frantic with drink, and, unfortunately, the spectators themselves were too much elevated for thoughts of danger or precaution. By what strange mysterious ties is our death sometimes related to events, remote, one might have thought, from all possible connexion with it! I had seen this man, on the evening when the vessel first appeared, talking with some of his comrades about her distress; and he retired with them, no doubt, to his snug quarters, blessing himself in his enjoyment and security. His story was plain and intelligible enough when it was all over; but how inconceivable would he have thought it, had he been told, at the moment when he was pitying the labouring ship, that she would bring death to only one—and that the one would be himself!

I should be happy to find out some grounds of excuse, or palliation, at least, for the spirit of plunder that prevails on our coasts, and is so general, indeed, that it may almost be imputed to us as a national reproach. At no very distant period the business of “wrecking” was often combined with acts of mer-

ciless violence and ferocity that the Cossacks or the Malays might have been ashamed to acknowledge. People were not then satisfied with robbing the ship, but would fall upon the unfortunate crew, carry off their little property, tear their clothes from their backs, and, if they resisted, knock them on the head. Such barbarities are now, thank God, seldom heard of. I have witnessed many shipwrecks on various parts of the coast, but certainly never saw ill usage or inhumanity of any kind extended towards the crews. On the contrary, the first consideration, with all denominations of people, even those who would be most forward to plunder when the season came, was invariably to make every effort in their power for the preservation of lives. In this generous labour, which is engaged in without a thought of reward, I have seen so many examples of the noblest courage and self-devotedness on the part of the "rogues and vagrants" of the sea-side, that I am almost willing to forgive them the ordinary trespasses of their trade. As the Reviewer said of Lord Byron's Corsair, they have "every virtue under heaven except common honesty." It is the ship and her cargo alone that they regard with hostility; and even these, in the present improved state of feeling on such subjects, are not condemned till they have had what is considered a fair trial. As long as a vessel holds together, and can be called a ship, they admit that it fairly belongs to its proprietors; but as soon as it is broken up and scattered

in fragments along the shore, it is nothing—its identity is gone for ever. In this state of dissolution, they consider it as at once emancipated from all exclusive claims of ownership, and cast, beyond all recognised boundaries of law and right, upon some waste element, as it were, or scramble-land, open to any adventurer who fears not the sea and surf. They do not feel that plunder in such a case is chargeable with any degree of cruelty and injustice; the sea, they say, has done all the mischief; we only take what it pleases to send us; and, whether it be lobsters and flat-fish, or pieces of plank and coils of rope, we hold ourselves equally innocent. You might tell them, that a considerable part of a wreck might be collected for the benefit of the owners; but you cannot tell them what part; and, as they know that a considerable portion of it is likely to be swept away by the sea, they choose to think that all which they save is justly made their own. A certain quantity may or may not be recovered—nothing can be more doubtful—and in the meantime, the whole lies in so loose a state, so unnoticed and unguarded, so much in short like something lost, that they cannot help believing that it belongs to any body who will stoop to pick it up. “We found it,” they say, “and there can be no harm in that.” You may tell them too that if there is no other owner, the lord of the manor has the first turn; but the reasonableness of his priority is quite beyond their comprehension; and, to speak honestly,

I do not wonder at it. His estate, they think terminates with the land, and has no continuity, as far as interest and authority are concerned, with the shore: *that* belongs to the sea, which belongs, they contend, to everybody. How far does the lord paramount push his dominions? To low water mark! *High-water* mark is his natural frontier, according to the popular opinion; and I am greatly inclined to agree with it. If he has a just title to every old cask and plank that is cast on the shore by the sea, he may with equal propriety, as it appears to me, claim all its natural produce, the fish, as far as I know not what mark; and in this manner, our sovereign squires round the kingdom might come to the grace of parcelling out the ocean among themselves, as they have parcelled out the air, and make it as criminal to pick up a periwinkle as to shoot a partridge.

The occasional interference of lords of manors, with their arrogant and unintelligible pretensions, tends rather to quicken, than restrain, the general eagerness for plunder. "If you come to that, what business has *he* with it more than another?" I have been often asked by some of these rapacious people, and I never could answer them to their satisfaction or my own. Convince them that "wrecking" is robbery, and they will cheerfully desist from the practice. It is by no means the needy and knavish alone whom you may see hovering with eager eyes and ready hands about a stranded ship: men of

substance and character, who hold their heads high in the world, attend vestries, and sit upon juries join in the pursuit without scruple or shame. The baker, the butcher, the grocer, the whole aristocracy of the village, are perfectly prepared to pick up any little portable God-send on the sea-shore, that may come in their way; though they are all, undoubtedly, people who would scorn to soil their hands by any of the vulgar modes of plain and admitted dishonesty. Mr.—, our respectable blacksmith and bell-hanger, would not hesitate to find property belonging to a wreck, to the amount of twenty or thirty pounds, or more, if he could be so lucky; but he would sooner die, I am sure, than pick a neighbour's pocket of a penny, and would combine with all honest men to hoot down the wretch who could be guilty of such a deed, as too infamous for this earth.

Ignorance and prejudice, confirmed and endeared by immemorial habit, are the cause of these moral inconsistencies; and they are the more obstinate, no doubt, as they happen to have a little present profit on their side. All such blinds will eventually be cleared away, I trust, by that "growing intelligence of the age," which we hear so much of just now, but which has not yet got quite so far as the coast. Severe laws and violent punishments would have no effect: as they would not enlighten the minds of "wreckers," they would be regarded only, like the game-laws and the penalties against smug-

gling, as tyrannical exertions of authority against the poor man's right of a livelihood. The victory will not be speedy or easy, whatever are the means applied; as any one may convince himself, who will take the trouble to reason a little with a "wrecker" on the nature of his opinions. I have done my best as a good subject, to open the eyes of such offenders as have fallen in my way; but, whatever I may be fit for, I have not discovered in myself any gift of making converts amongst them. I talk to them of doing as they would be done by; and they answer me, that they will have no such new-fangled doctrines on the sea shore; and that what was no sin with their fathers before them, can scarcely be sin in them. What! not let a man take what the sea sends?—there will be no living in England then, if this is to be law. They talk of a good wreck-season as of a good herring-season, and thank Providence for both.



THE IRISH PRIEST'S FROLIC.

BY MRS. CAROLINE WHITE.



ELL, why, long ago in the barony of Imokilly, in the county of Cork, by the roadside at the foot of Wather-grass-hill, there lived an owld schamer ov a man, in a bit ov a farm, wid a turf bog a' one side, an' a garden ov pratees convanient. All the child-

ther he had in the worl' was one girl, a daughte~~er~~
 an' 'tis she was the fine, clevir colleen, tidy an' pur~~ty~~
 as you'd wish to be afther lookin' at, an' a go~~od~~
 knitter, an' spinner, an' every thing that 'ed ~~be~~
 wantin' to her to be, why she was. Well, one da~~y~~
 as the owld cobbeen, her father, was standin' at th~~e~~
 treshould ov the doore, what 'ed he see but a ha~~nd~~
 careless soort ov a fellow comin' up to him wid hi~~s~~
 grate-coat hangin' to his shouldthers, an' his brogue~~s~~
 clippin' to his heels!

"God save ye!" says the strange boy; "God
 save ye kindly!" says the owld man, inside the
 doore. "I'm this way lookin' for a place," says
 the begaun beg*; "would ye be afther hirein' a
 servant?" says he. "Och! no!" says the owld fello',
 shakin' his head, "I've no call for a servant;" and
 thin, as if the second thought cum to him, "What
 wages are ye askin'?" says he. "Faith! whatevir
 'ed be plazing to yourself," says the poor boy, no
 ways partick'lar, by reason he was so bad off. "What
 work are ye able for?" says the other. "Wisha! I
 can dig and reap an' 'tach," says the boy, "an' be
 handy for other things about the house, if it 'ed be
 wantin' for me." "See that now—'pon my word!
 I'll engage 'tis you'r the clevir boy enough," says the
 owld schamier, puttin' out a bandle† ov his tongue
 behind his back; "but I don't want a boy at all, at
 all," says he, "only as I likes the look ov ye, I'll

* Simple boy.

† A measure so called.

"Ye what I'll be afther doing wid ye,"—wid that the boy looks up at him like a young crow wid his mouth open—"I've a nice little piece ov a girl widin' ye," says the big owld rogue, "only she's too young marry yet, the crathur; but if you'll wait a mather three years, I'll give her to ye, an' faith I can tell she'll hav' no bad potion comin' to her."

Well, why the boy was a poor, soft, gomalah of a lo', an' he redened up to the two ears, for what 'ed see peeping out at him but the colleen herself, an' ready to die wid the laugh she had—an' sure ough such another purty crathur ever he seen; an' "For! I will," says he. "Very well," says the owld cher, puttin' a grin on himself, to think how fine an' y he got him (for sure he had no intintion ov the ort, only jist to make a fool ov him, as he seem'd sh a shrinallah mathaum* altogether).

Well an' good, he was the best poor fello' evir m into a house; everything thriv'd with him better an another; an' before the ind ov the three years e had as fine a farm for the owld schamp as you'd e from this to Droghedy (ov the likes ov it); an' is he had the doing an' dotherin' of every thing, aying an' sellin'; I'll engage 'tis himself used to do all; an' whin he'd be goin' to a fair, or a pattern, faith he'd hav' his saddle craikin' unfther him, ke a rale gentleman; an' a crown or more may be o spind by an' by, for all the worl' as if he war the

* Foolish fellow.

owld man's son ; an' faith if it is the girl an' himsel
got very fond entirely ov one another ; an' between
the business an' the coortin' he didn't hear the three
years goin' from him. At long last he says this way
to the owld father, "The three years are gone now,"
says he, "an' 'tis time for me to think ov myself a
mossa ! You can't say any way but I did my juty
by ye. So now, in God's name, giv' me the little
girl as you promised me in the big'ning, an' let us
settle the thing soon an' suddint." "Och, hone ! is
it to giv' my elligent daughter to the likes ov you,
for a know nothing caubogue ?" says the owld mon-
sthrous decaiver, screechin' out, an' puttin' a crane's
neck on himself. "Do you think it is mad I am,
or what ailes me ? Don't mintion it," says he, "ye
Kerry goat ! ye camel ! ye gipsy !" says he, "the
ha'f-starved gossoon that I tuck in afther skimble
skambling about the counthry like a wild Ingin !"
says he ; an' wid that he fell a coughing, as if the
life 'ed leave him wid the bare madness. "O !
there's no harm done, at all evints," says the poor
boy, for all he was scalded to the heart. "The
worl's wide," says he ; "so pay me my wages in the
way ; I 'ont be any longer a Kerry goat wid ye, an'
let me go about my business." "As for wages,"
says the owld man, settin' a grin on himself, "I
never promised ye the like ; an' since you hav' been
wid me," says he, "did I ever hindther you ov doing
what 'ed be plazing to yourself ? an' often gav' ye a
tinpenny, an' a crown, an' lint ye my own horse an'

Saddle, not to mintion the cortherooy shute, an' the illegant blue coat for Sunday; it would be fittier for ye," says he, "to go to yer business, an' nat mind the likes. I can't say but what you'r a quiet honest boy, anyhow; but my daughter's young enough to marry yet a while; wait another little spell an' she's for ye."

Well, the boy goes in with himself; but if it is he entermined in his own mind to match the owld rogue. So in a short time he says to him, says he, "Since first I cum to you I never sot eyes on my own people; so wid ye'r lave," says he, "I've a great notion ov going for a couple ov days to see a relation of my mother's (may the heavens be her bed!) that's not a grate way off from us." "Do, avick! in God's name," says the owld man, "an' take the horse wid ye an' my blessin'; but don't stay long." "There's no fear ov that," says the boy, with a shly look at Kate.

We'll away wid him, 'til he came to a preist's house, that was a soort ov a relation to himself, an' faith the preist was rejiced to see him for this reason, because he came so sildom, an' he axed him where he was, an' how the worl' used him; and wid that the boy up an' tould every thing that had happen'd to him, first an' last, an' how the owld schamer of a man had dacaived him, wid his plaumaussa an' soft talk in regard ov his daughther—not forgetting the friendship that was betwixt them.

"Keep up your spirits," says the preist, "an' don't giv' yerself any uneasiness about it," says he;

"lave the mather to me, and never fear but I'll find a way to punish the owld rogue: tell me is he a go warrant to give a beggar a night's lodging?" "Thin, indeed, he is," says Shone, "Devil a bether, w respect to you." "Well an' good," says the preist "we'll manage the business betwixt us;" an' wid that my dear, he tells the boy the plan he had; an' whin i was all fixed, away wid Shone, as fast as the horse' four legs ed take him home agin. So the first oppor—thunity he got, he tould Kate ov the schame betwixt himself an' the preist, an' long enough they thought is, till a couple ov nights aftherwards, whin at the God's speed, jist as they war sittin' down to their supper, who'd cum up to the doore but a fine slashing fello' ov a begger? "God save all here," says he; "God save ye kindly," says the owld man, making answer. "Charity, for the honour ov God! an' the Lord spare the provither," says the strange begger, outside the doore. "Côme in, in God's name," says the owld man, makin' room for him beside the hob. "Hav' ye a good warrant to tell a story?" says he. "Oh! thin, 'tis I that hav'," says the beggerman.

So win the pratees were boiled, he got his supper along wid the rest, an' a dthrop ov potheen afther it. An' whin the neighbours heard ov the strange begger being there, they all gathered to 'em, an sot down about the fire, listening to the stories, an' if they hadn't quioile* the dicens bein' in the dice. Wid that

* Fun.

the owld man's heart was open; an' by an' by the beggerman whispers him, "That's the purty peice ov a colleen," pointing to the daughther. "Oh! thin, indeed, she is," says the father, pullin' up his cravat, "an' as good as she's purty." "An' is that fine grown gossoon ye'r son?" says the purty boy ov a begger. "Och, no," says the owld man, puttin' a twist in his nose, "och, no. Is it that shrimalah mathaun to be my son? Wait awhile, why, till I'll tell ye about him. That fello' hav' been wid me these three years, workin for nothin, only his 'ating an' dthrinkin, an' a thrifle of cloathes, on account ov a soort ov ha'f promise I gave him ov my daughther." "Oh! the insensible boy, I'm astonished at him," says the begger. "Wisha! I can't blame ye," says the owld cobbeen. "Sich a fool entirely I never heard ov," says the other. "I'll engage you didn't," says the owld man; "but I can tell ye, that to this day he hav' every notion of it; nothing else is keepin' him here."

Wid that the two ov thim burst out laughing, an' the beggerman says to the owld fello', "Faith 'tis a pity not to make a fool ov him all-together, since he's so soft." "Iss, if we had any soort ov a plan," says the father. "Whist, wait awhile," says the good begger; "Dicens a castle in Kildare, if I don't find a schame that 'll be afther makin' a rale show ov him. I do' know," says he, looking a little unsartin, "if it 'ed be of any use for me. I'm afeard afther all he's not sich a gamallah as to b'lieve me." "Yea,

what is it, agra?" says the other (impatient he was 'till he'd hear the schame). "I was thinkin', if I'd let on I was a preist that had a vow," says the begger, winkin' his eye at the owld man. "Oh! that's illegant," says the owld gandther, screeching out, laughing. "Come here, Shone avick!" says he, "'tis many a long day since I promised Kate to ye, a nenow! an' now she's for you—take her, in God's name, an' my blessin', an' the blessin' ov God may 'tind ye—ye! What are you doing lookin' about ye, this way an' that way, as if the sinses had left ye? This is no begger at all, at all," says he, whispering him, "but a preist that comes all the way from your own place, so call over the little girl till you'll get married. Devil a doubt but we'll hav' one merry night out ov ye, at all evints." Wid that all the people began to laugh, an' Shone put a soft face on himself, in the way he 'ed keep up the joke. "'Tis funnin' you are!" says he, "for how 'ed we be married widout a ring?" "Oh! that's thrue, sure enough," says the owld fellow. "Kate, aragal!" says he, winkin' at her, as it were to carry on the fun, "Kate, aragal! there's your mother's ring (God rest her sowl!) in the big chest beyond there*."

So, faith, it wasn't long till she brought it up, an' the pair ov thim went down upon their knees before the preist (as it were). "I know every bit of the

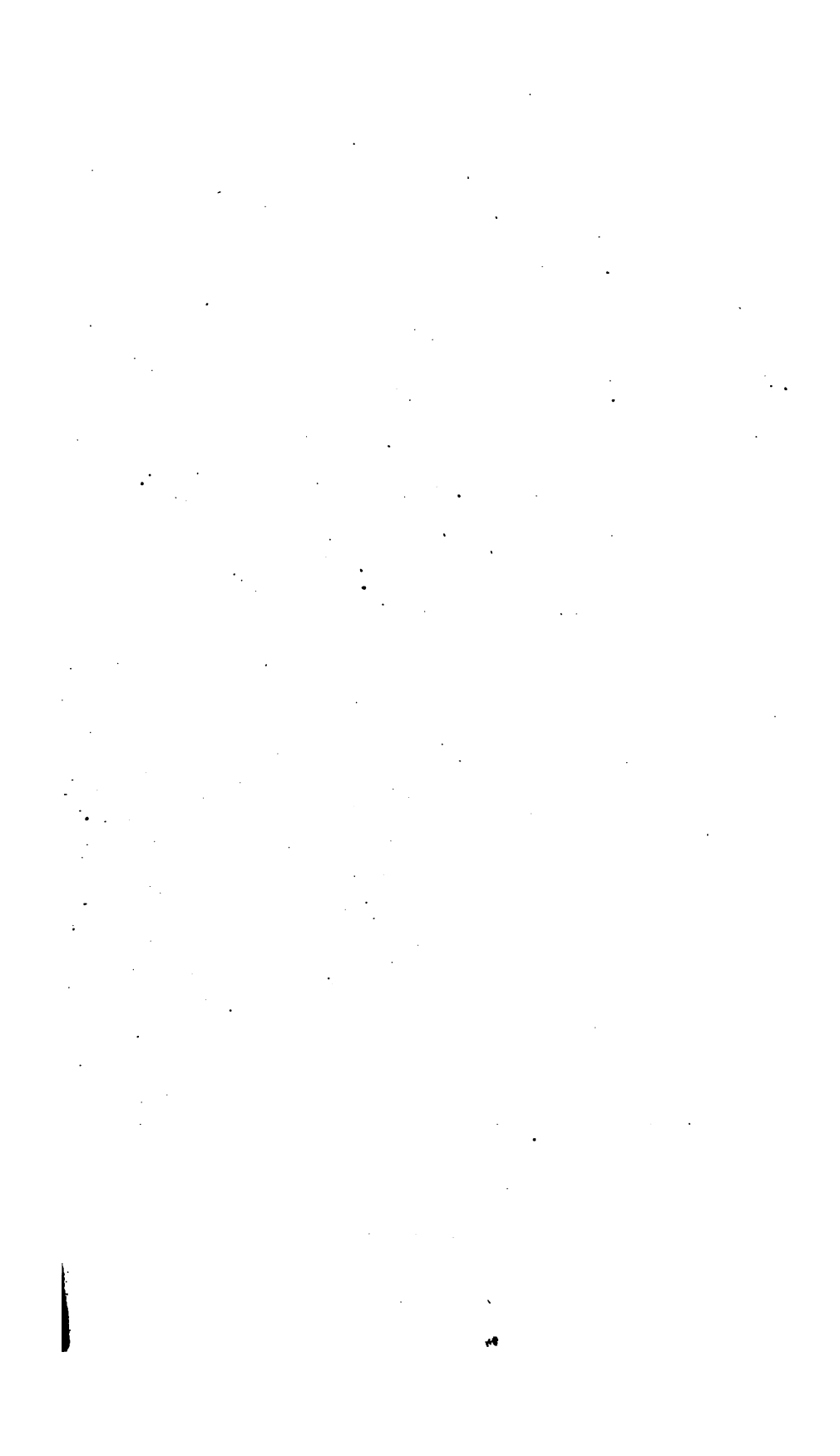
* The lower order of Irish are not superstitious as regards a "twice-used ring."

podreen," says the begger, whispering over to the owld man, that was crackin his sides wid the laugh he had; an' sure enough he said every word of it just as if it is the book he was reading, till he cum to put the ring on her finger, whin down he lets the ragged owld coat fall off ov him, an' there he was, a rale preist, sure enough. "Och! murther!" says the owld man, screeching out, "ye pack of outrageous schamers—ye vagabonds ov the world!" says he; "sure I didn't mean it at all, at all, only for a bit ov divarshion." "Hould y'er nise, my good man," says the preist, "'tis jist as good for you, for this young couple is as lawfully married as any in the room, an' with y'er own consint too; God bless ye, young people," say he, "an' spare ye long together." An' wid that the people couldn't keep the laugh off ov them, for all the preist was to the fore, to think how fine the owld sleveen was caught in his own thrap.

THE END.

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